



South Mountain Freeway Study

December 13, 2007
Citizens Advisory Team Meeting

South Mountain Community College
Student Union

Agenda

Agenda Topic	Discussion Lead(s)	Expected Outcome(s)	Action Item(s)	Time
Check-In & dinner				5:30 PM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome & introductions Team member questions and comments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tom Keller All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductions of all new participants (if any) Ask questions/clarification on issues, articles, press info since last meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	6:00 PM
CAT Role and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tom Keller 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	6:15 PM
Gila River Indian Community - Right of Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tim Tait 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	6:30 PM
Meeting Schedule and Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tim Tait 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	6:45 PM
Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break 	7:00 PM
Projected commercial vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bob Hazlett 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of potential commercial vehicle volumes on the proposed SMF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide diagram 	7:15 PM
Traffic Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amy Edwards and Ben Spargo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion of traffic studies completed and results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	7:30 PM
Visitor Comment Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tom Keller 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBD 	8:15 PM



Welcome & Introductions

- Facilitators
 - Tom Keller, KCA
 - Fred Erickson, KCA
- ADOT
- FHWA



SMCAT Membership

Organization Name	Name	Attendance
Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce	Carola Tamarkin	6/6 (100%)
The Foothills HOA	Chad Blostone	3/6 (50%)
Ahwatukee Village Planning Committee	Laurel Arndt	4/6 (67%)
Arizona Trucking Association	Dave Williams	1/6 (17%)
Arlington HOA	Camilo Acosta	1/2 (50%)
AZ Public Health Association	Al Brown	2/2 (100%)
Bougainvillea HOA	Timothy Stone	2/2 (100%)
Calabrea HOA	Brian Smith	2/2 (100%)
City of Avondale	Jim McDonald	4/6 (67%)
City of Tolleson	David Lafferty	3/6 (50%)
East Valley Partnership	Jack Sellers	3/3 (100%)
Estrella Village Planning Committee	Peggy Eastburn	5/6 (83%)
Foothills Reserve HOA	Cathy Lopez/Derrick Denis	2/2 (100%)
Gila River Indian Community - District 4	TBD	0/6 (0%)
Kyrene Elementary District	Terry Tatterfield	4/6 (67%)
Lakewood HOA	John Rodriguez	5/6 (83%)
Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development	Laurie Prendergast	4/6 (67%)
Laveen Village Planning Committee	Michael Norton	4/6 (67%)
Maricopa County Farm Bureau	Clayton Danzeisen	4/6 (67%)
Mountain Park Ranch HOA	Jim Welch	2/2 (100%)
Pecos Road/I-10 Landowners Association	Nathaniel Percharo	1/6 (17%)
Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council	Michael Goodman	6/6 (100%)
Sierra Club	Sandy Bahr	6/6 (100%)
Silverado Ranch	Eric Baim	2/2 (100%)
South Mountain Village Planning Committee	Tamala Daniels	2/6 (33%)
South Mountain/Laveen Chamber of Commerce	Lisa Bray	3/6 (50%)
Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce	Don Jones	6/6 (100%)
Valley Forward	Dave Olney	6/6 (100%)



CAT Purpose Statement

The South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team (SMCAT) will **provide a forum for communication** between the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the local community regarding the proposed South Mountain Freeway.

The SMCAT is a **voluntary advisory team** and **not a decision-making body**, and it will not be responsible for decisions made by the State of Arizona or the FHWA. The SMCAT **will meet regularly to review project status and provide input on issues** that are relevant to the project.



CAT Meeting Protocol

- Welcome and Introductions
- Establish a quorum
- Agenda
- Timekeeping process
- Standards for behavior notification
- “Discussion, debate, recommend” process
- Welcome visitors
- Parking lot (issues)
- Breaks



CAT Behavior

- SMCAT members are expected to treat each other with mutual courtesy, respect and dignity.
- Since the SMCAT is a voluntary, advisory team, it is important that individual. SMCAT members abide by accepted standards of behavior.
- Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and will be grounds for exclusion from further participation in SMCAT activities.
- Any SMCAT member who acts disrespectfully toward other members, disrupts the SMCAT process, or is unable to attend meetings on a consistent basis may be required by the third party facilitator, the ADOT public involvement team, or a majority of the other SMCAT members to leave or resign from the SMCAT.



Timothy Tait
ADOT

**Gila River Indian Community
Right-of-Entry**



Timothy Tait
ADOT

Meeting Schedule and Topics

Meeting Schedule and Topics

Meeting	Topics
12/13/07	Traffic
1/17/08	E1 Alternative Initial Screening – Design and Affects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profile options along Pecos Road Section <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freeway below existing ground Freeway on existing ground Identified alternative in the DEIS Profile options at South Mountain Ridges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Cut Bridge Tunnel Identified alternative in the DEIS
2/28/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jurisdictional Waters Water Resources Floodplains

Meeting Schedule and Topics

Meeting	Topics
3/20/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual Resources Land Use Biological Resources
4/17/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazardous Materials Energy Geotechnical Utilities
5/22/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Conditions Environmental Justice Noise
	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 4(f) and 6(f) Cultural Resources
	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economics Prime and Unique Farmlands Cumulative & Secondary Impacts
	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Comment Summary Construction Cost/Right-of-Way Cost/Total Cost

Meeting Schedule and Topics

Meeting	Topics
	Air Quality Panel - General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion of air quality issues, non-project specific.
Release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review and comment.	
	Air Quality Panel - Project Specific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion of air quality issues, project specific.
	DEIS Open Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss comparison of impacts of Action versus No-Action Alternative ▪ Discuss mitigation ▪ CAT member discussion regarding the DEIS
	CAT Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CAT recommendation regarding Action versus No-Action Alternative

Break



Projected Commercial Traffic

Bob Hazlett, MAG



Traffic Study

Amy Edwards & Ben Spargo, HDR

How is traffic measured?

- Counted for existing conditions, predicted for future – 2030 on this project
- Traffic is evaluated based on daily volumes or peak volumes
- Traffic can be measured as:
 - Average Daily Traffic (ADT)
 - Vehicle per day (vpd)
 - Vehicles per hour (vph)
- Traffic model data used to forecast future traffic conditions – freeways and arterial streets

What is traffic congestion?

- Congestion refers to undesirable traffic conditions
- Congestion exists when...
 - the level of service is E or F
 - traffic on a freeway is moving at an average speed of 45 mph or less
 - or when the traffic flow is stop and go

What is level of service?

- Method developed to “grade” the quality of service
- “A” through “F” grading system
 - “A” being the best
 - “F” being the worst
- LOS is identified during the morning and evening commute periods when traffic volumes are the highest (or worst case conditions)

LOS Examples

Levels of service



LOS A



LOS B



LOS C



LOS D



LOS E

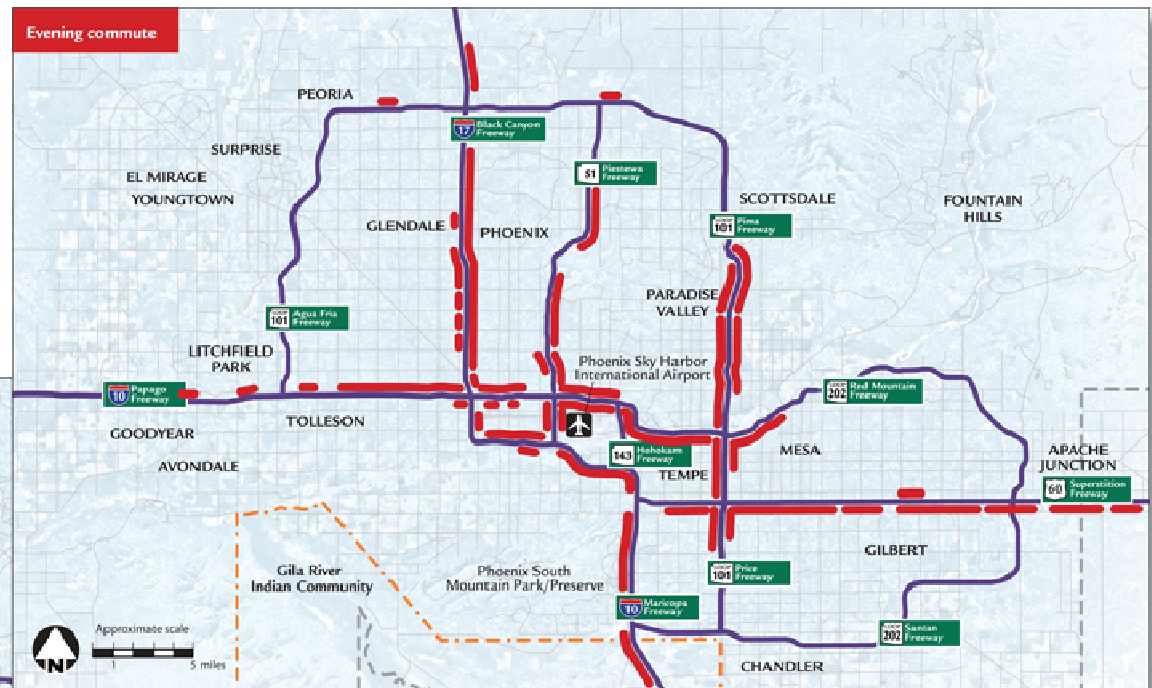
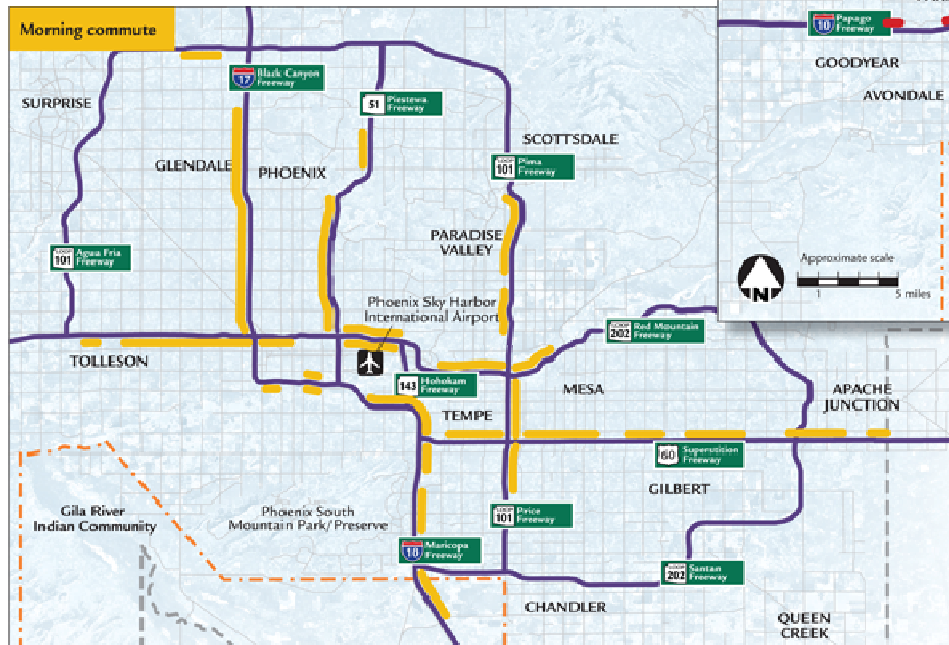


LOS F

- LOS E represents a freeway at capacity

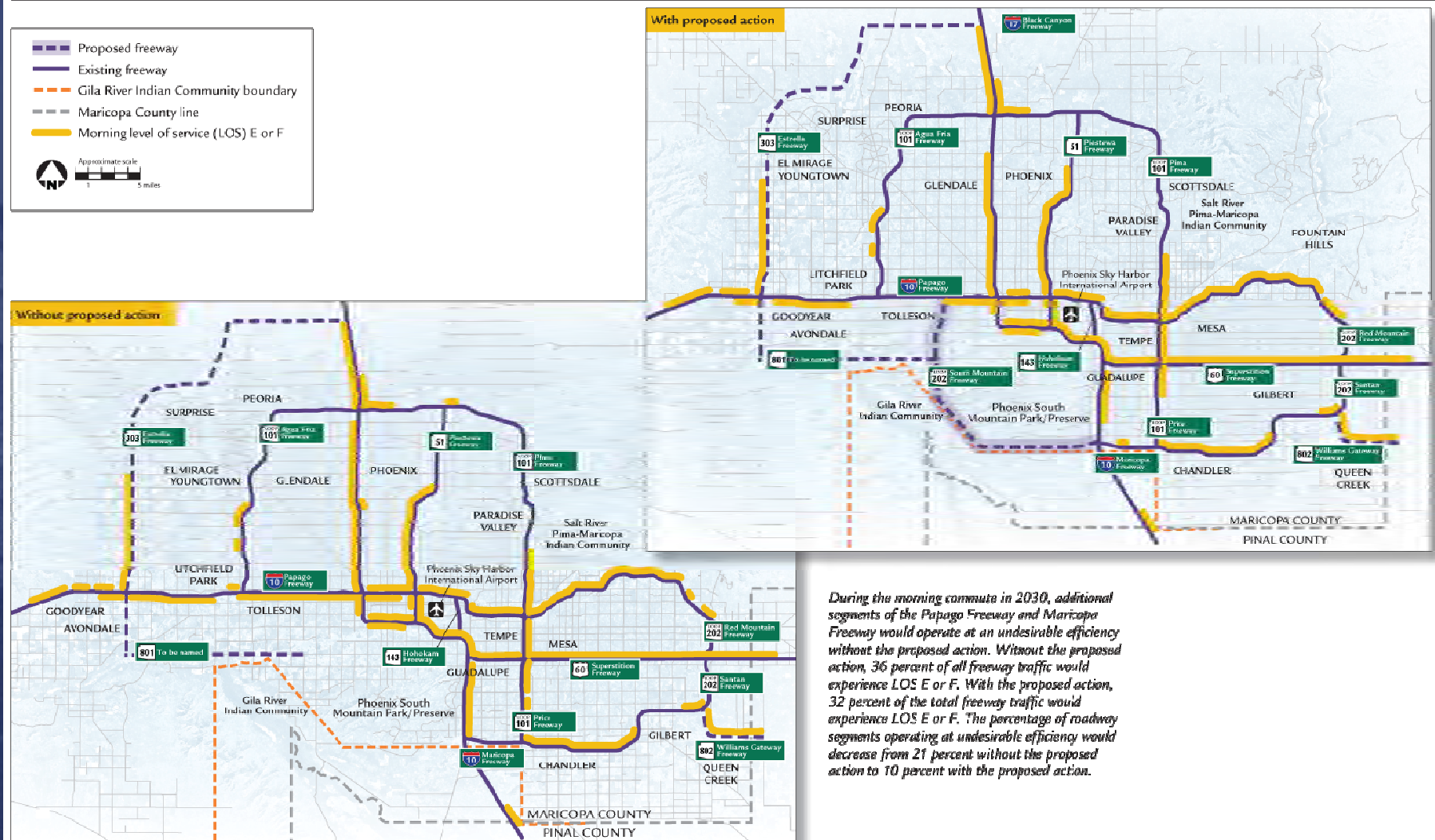
Modeled Level of Service, Freeways, 2004

- Existing freeway
- Gila River Indian Community boundary
- Maricopa County line
- Evening level of service (LOS) E or F
- Morning LOS E or F



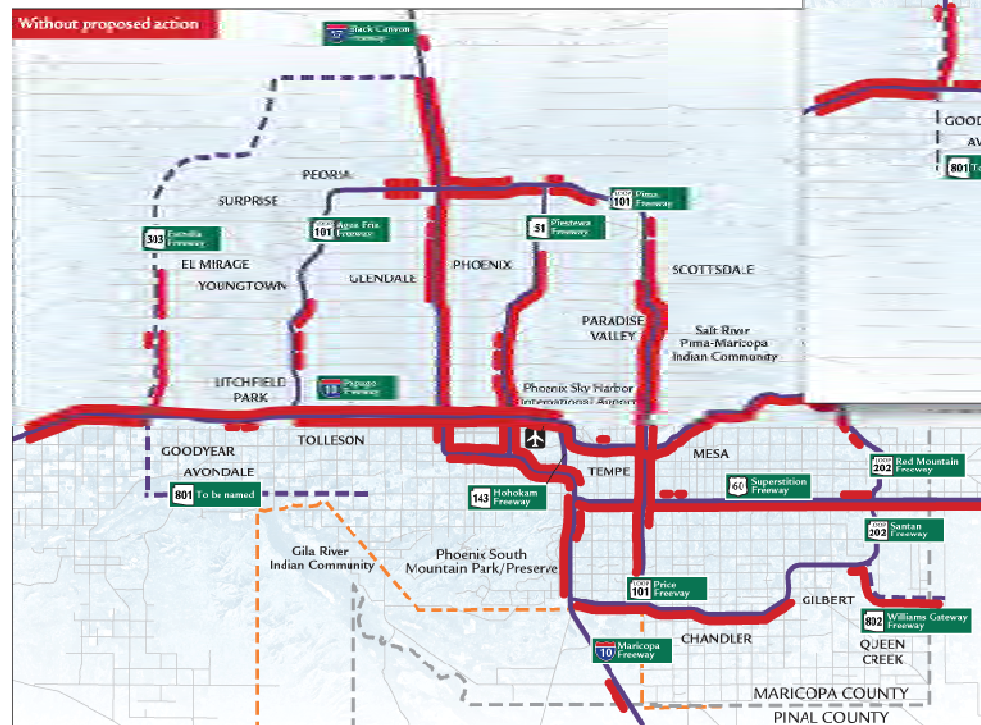
The highlighted freeway segments operate in an undesirable condition during the designated peak period. Typically, there is more overall congestion on the freeway system during the evening commute. In the morning, 12 percent of the freeway segments, which carry 23 percent of the total traffic, operate at LOS E or F. In the evening, 20 percent of the freeway segments, which carry 40 percent of the total traffic, operate at LOS E or F.

Morning Level of Service with and without the Proposed Action, 2030



Proposed freeway
 Existing freeway
 Gila River Indian Community boundary
 Maricopa County line
 Evening level of service (LOS) E or F

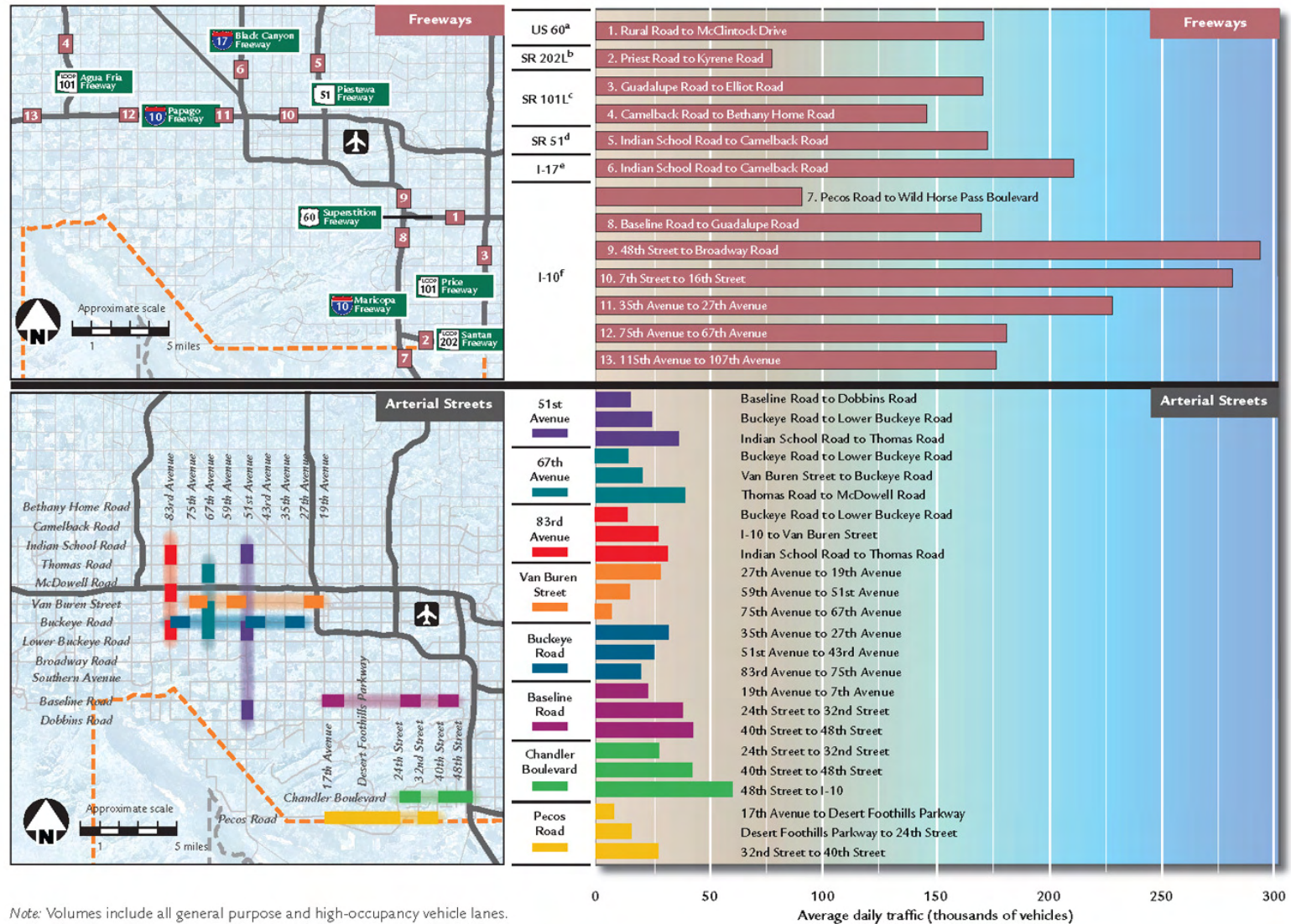
Approximate scale



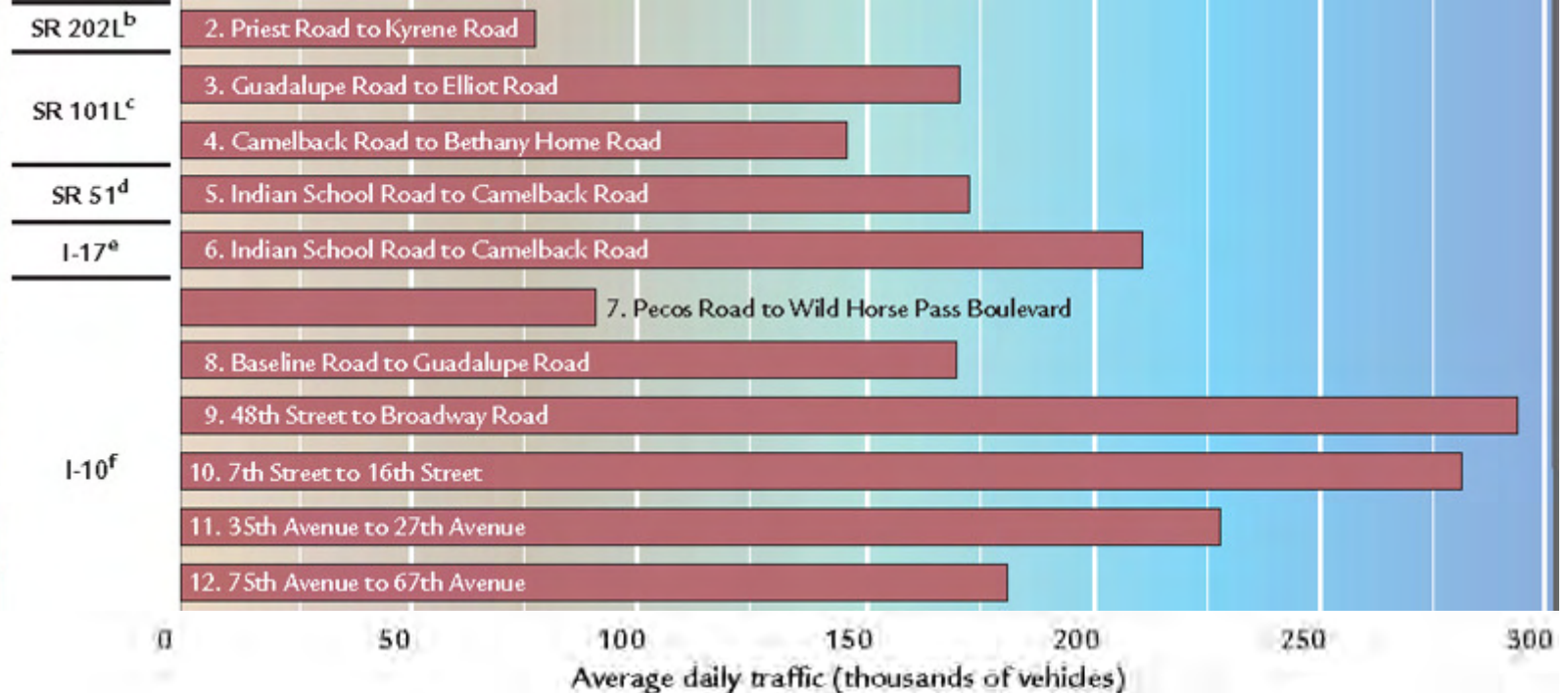
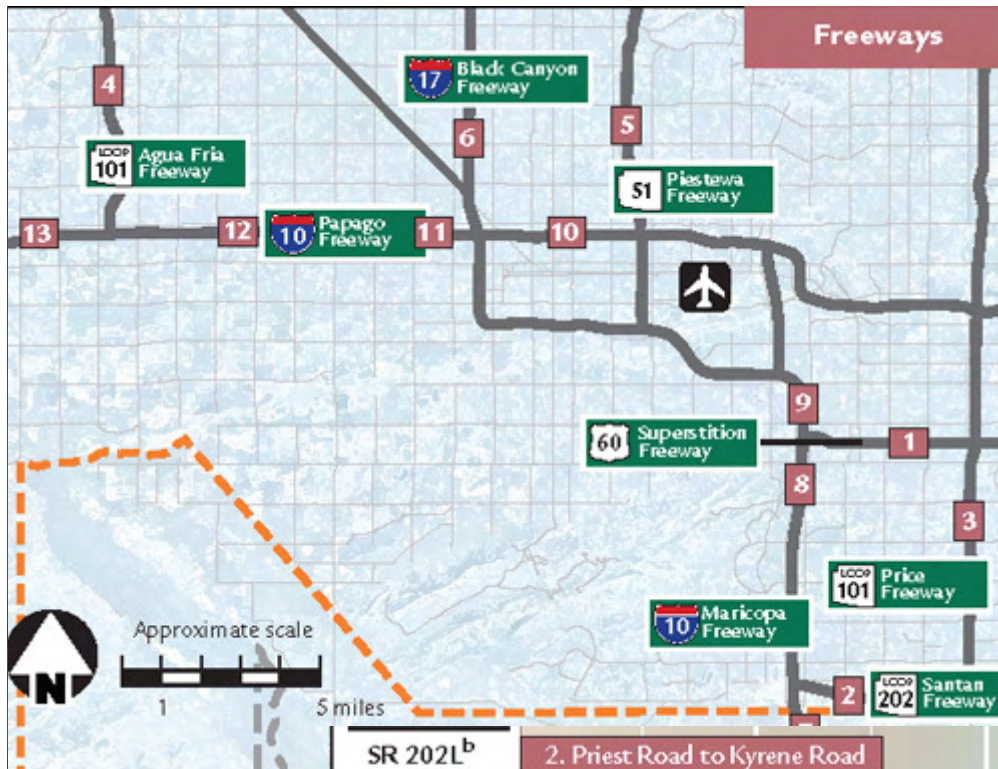
During the evening commute in 2030, additional segments of the Papago Freeway and Maricopa Freeway would operate at an undesirable efficiency without the proposed action. With the proposed action, 31 percent of all of the freeway segments, which would carry 55 percent of the total traffic, would operate at LOS E or F. Without the proposed action, 35 percent of all of the freeway segments, which would carry 60 percent of the total traffic, would operate at LOS E or F.

Current traffic conditions

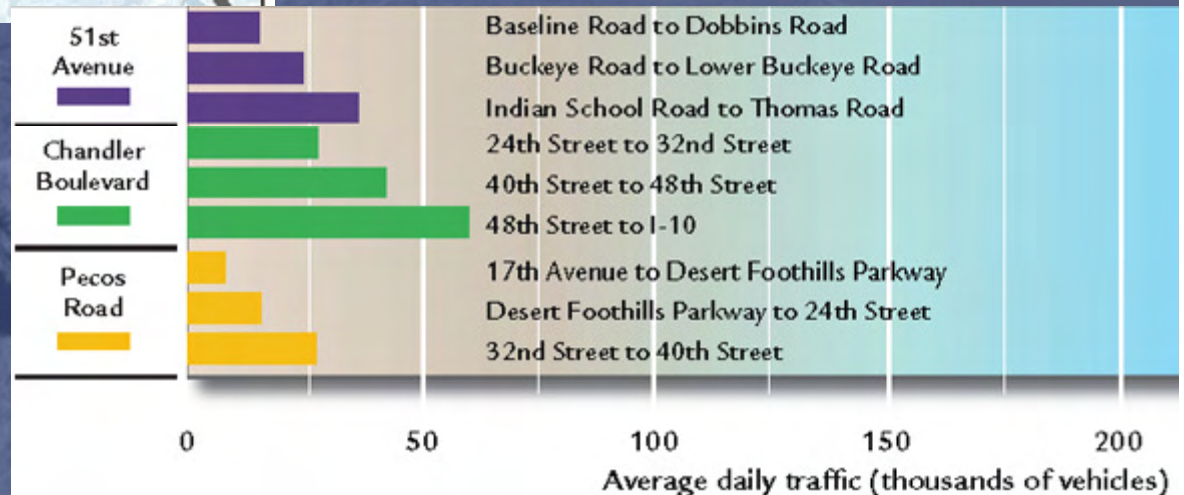
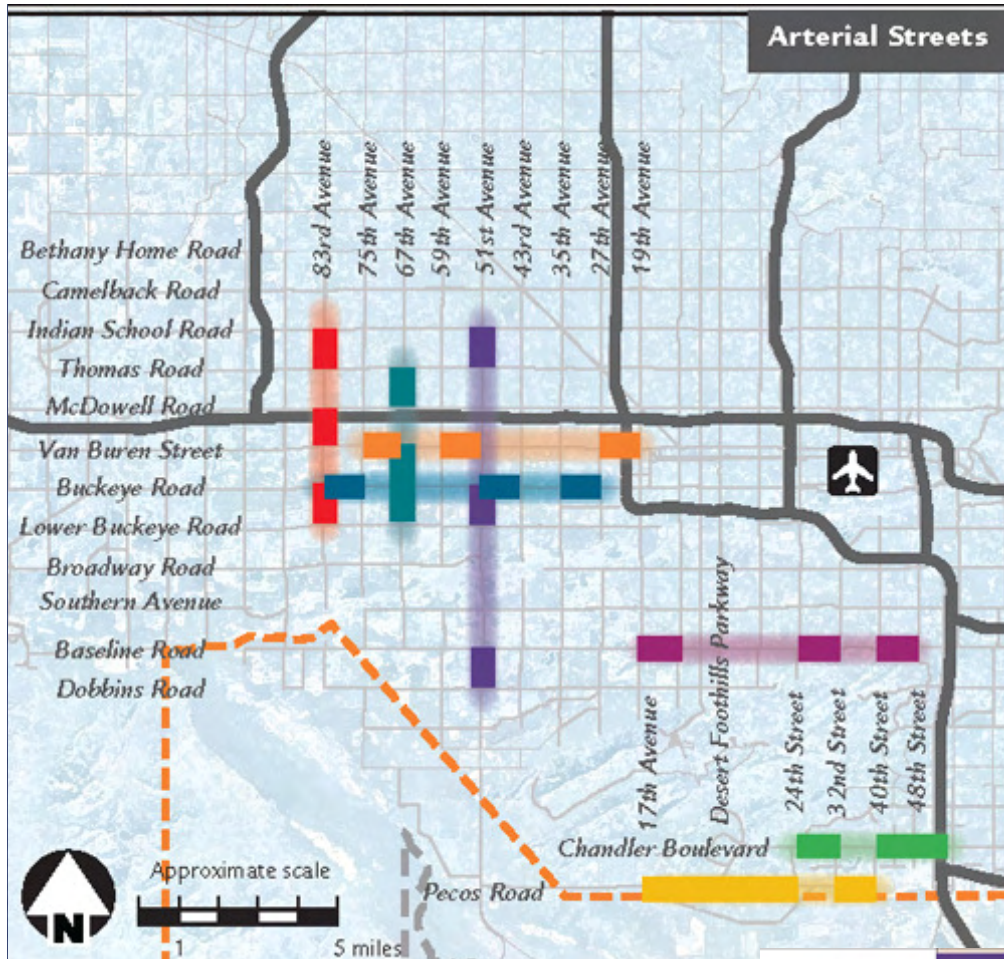
Average Daily Traffic Volumes on Freeways and Arterial Streets, 2005



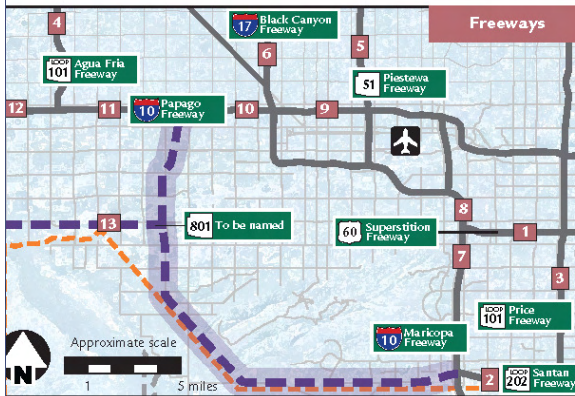
Current traffic conditions- Freeways



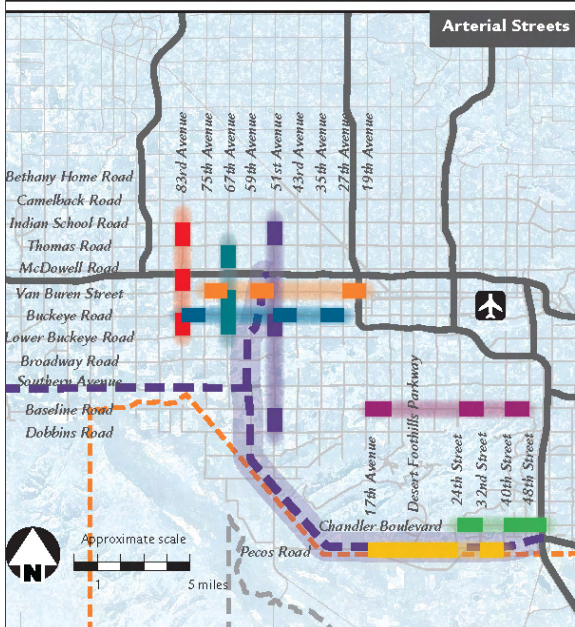
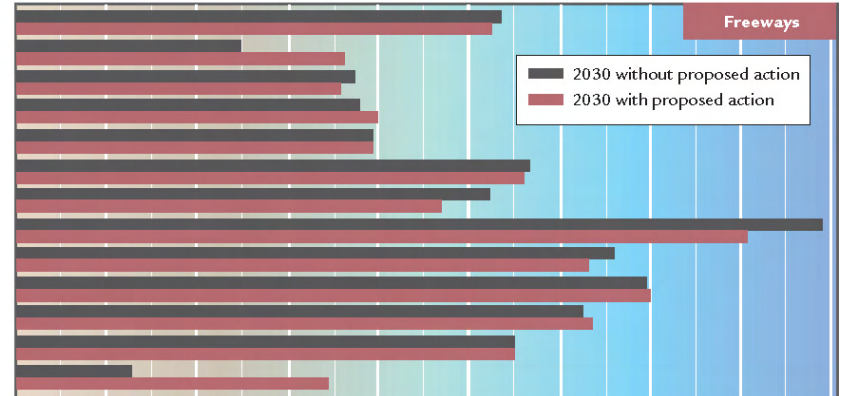
Current traffic conditions- Arterial Streets



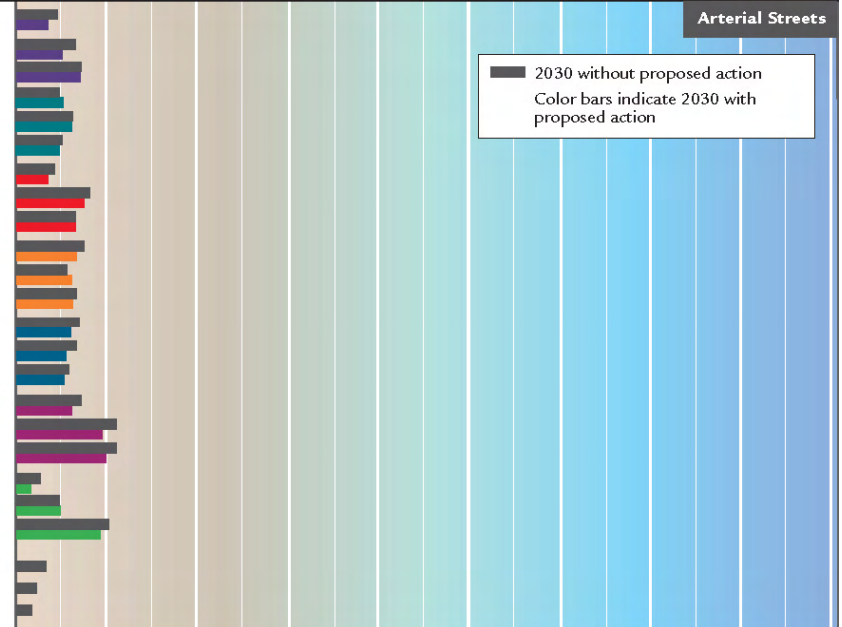
Future traffic conditions



US 60 ^a	1. Rural Road to McClintock Drive	-2+	-2
SR 202 ^b	2. Priest Drive to Kyrene Road	+59	+59
SR 101 ^c	3. Guadalupe Road to Elliot Road	-5	-5
	4. Camelback Road to Bethany Home Road	+4	+4
SR 51 ^d	5. Indian School Road to Camelback Road	0	0
I-17 ^e	6. Indian School Road to Camelback Road	-1	-1
	7. Baseline Road to Guadalupe Road	-10	-10
	8. 48th Street to Broadway Road	-9	-9
I-10 ^f	9. 7th Street to 16th Street	-4	-4
	10. 35th Avenue to 27th Avenue	0	0
	11. 83rd Avenue to 75th Avenue	+1	+1
	12. 115th Avenue to 107th Avenue	0	0
SR 801 ^g (proposed)	13. 83rd Avenue to 75th Avenue	+164	+164



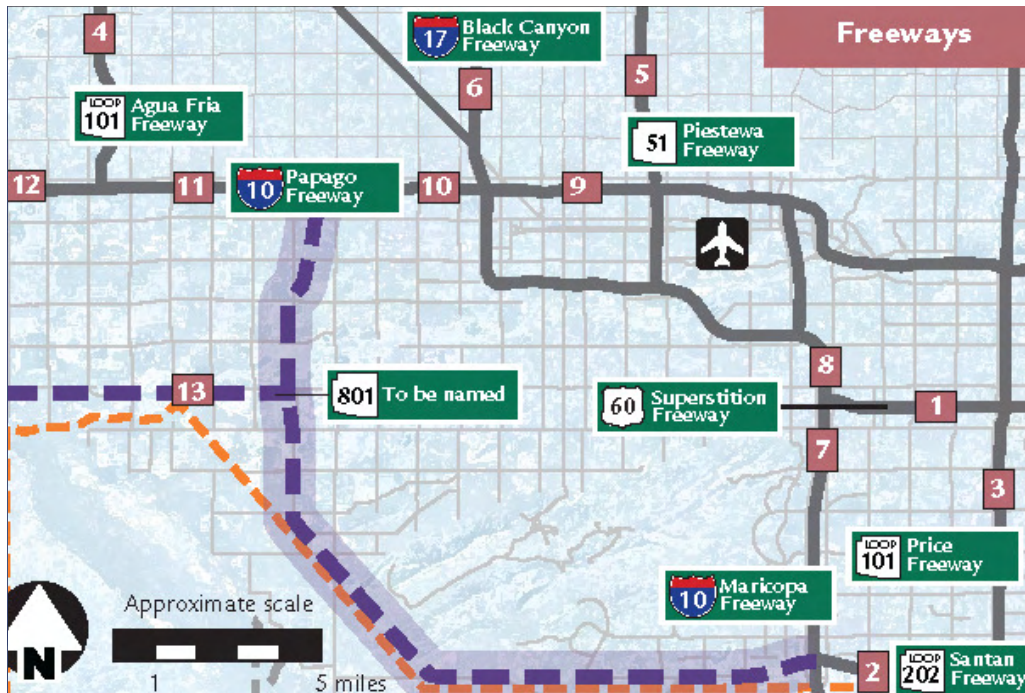
51st Avenue	Baseline Road to Dobbin Road	-22	-22
	Buckeye Road to Lower Buckeye Road	-22	-22
	Indian School Road to Thomas Road	-1	-1
67th Avenue	Buckeye Road to Lower Buckeye Road	+8	+8
	Van Buren Street to Buckeye Road	-1	-1
	Thomas Road to McDowell Road	-4	-4
83rd Avenue	Buckeye Road to Lower Buckeye Road	-15	-15
	I-10 to Van Buren Street	-9	-9
	Indian School Road to Thomas Road	-2	-2
Van Buren Street	27th Avenue to 19th Avenue	-10	-10
	59th Avenue to 51st Avenue	+10	+10
	75th Avenue to 67th Avenue	-6	-6
Buckeye Road	35th Avenue to 27th Avenue	-13	-13
	51st Avenue to 43rd Avenue	-16	-16
	83rd Avenue to 75th Avenue	-8	-8
Baseline Road	19th Avenue to 7th Avenue	-11	-11
	24th Street to 32nd Street	-11	-11
	40th Street to 48th Street	-9	-9
Chandler Boulevard	24th Street to 32nd Street	-36	-36
	40th Street to 48th Street	+2	+2
	48th Street to I-10	-8	-8
Pecos Road	32nd Street to 40th Street		
	Desert Foothills Parkway to 24th Street		
	17th Avenue to Desert Foothills Parkway		



ADT
reduction
(%)

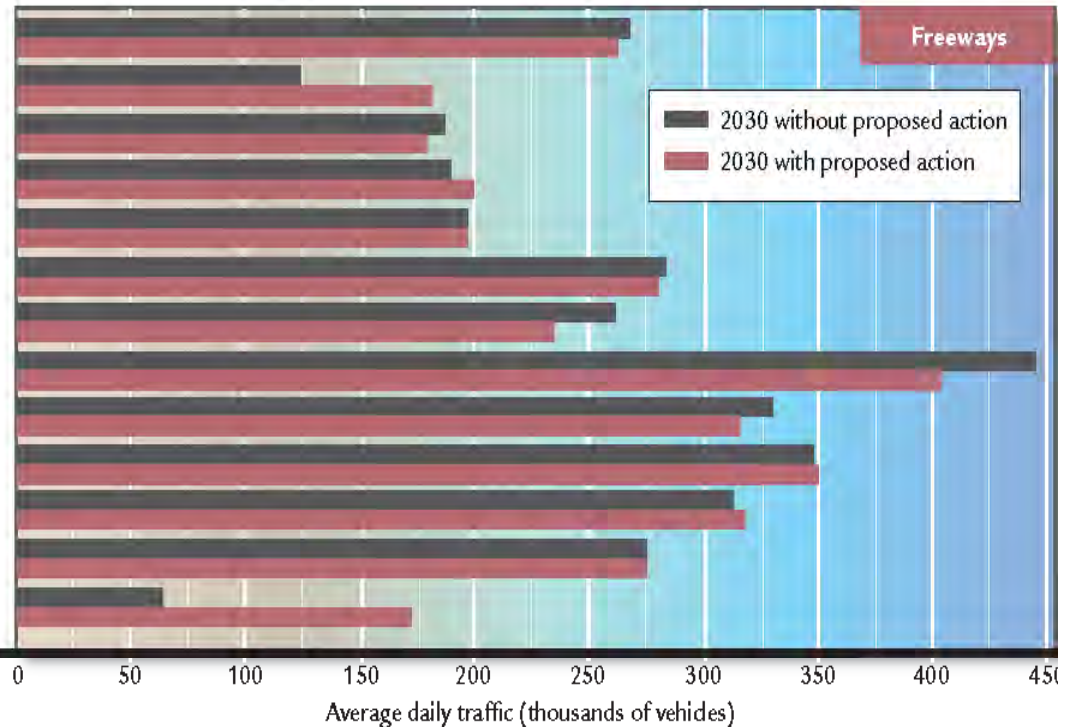
Average daily traffic (thousands of vehicles)

Future traffic conditions- Freeways

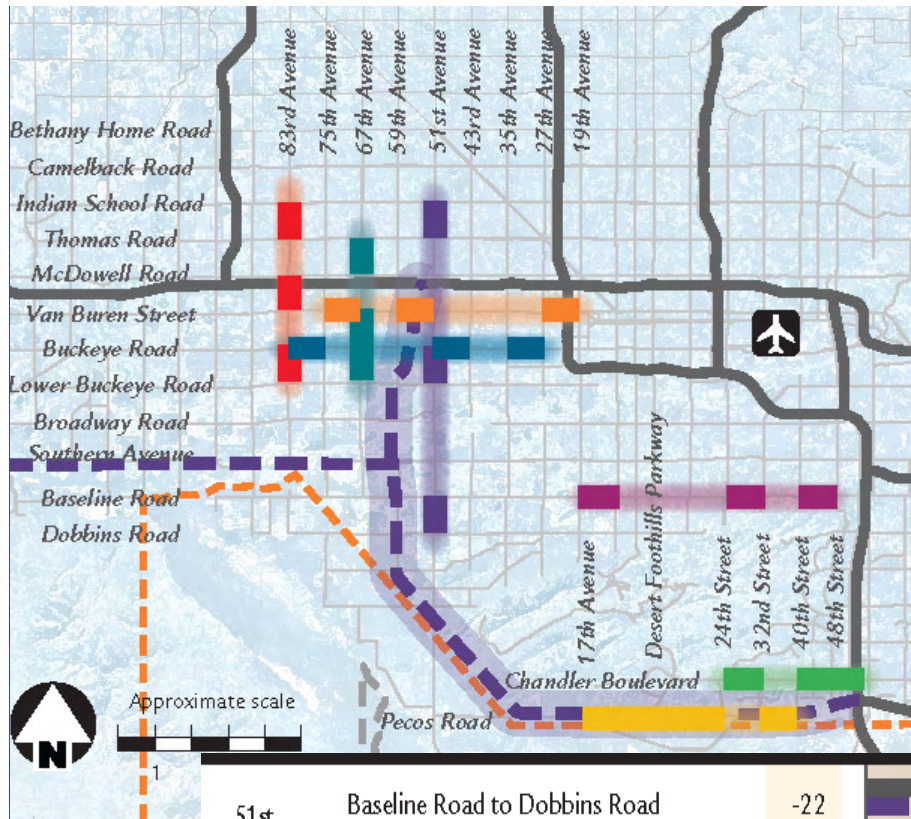


US 60 ^a	1. Rural Road to McClintock Drive	-2+	-2
SR 202L ^b	2. Priest Drive to Kyrene Road	+59	+59
SR 101L ^c	3. Guadalupe Road to Elliot Road		-5
	4. Camelback Road to Bethany Home Road		+4
SR 51 ^d	5. Indian School Road to Camelback Road		0
I-17 ^e	6. Indian School Road to Camelback Road		-1
I-10 ^f	7. Baseline Road to Guadalupe Road		-10
	8. 48th Street to Broadway Road		-9
	9. 7th Street to 16th Street		-4
	10. 35th Avenue to 27th Avenue		0
	11. 83rd Avenue to 75th Avenue		+1
	12. 115th Avenue to 107th Avenue		0
SR 801 ^g (proposed)	13. 83rd Avenue to 75th Avenue		+164

ADT
reduction
(%)

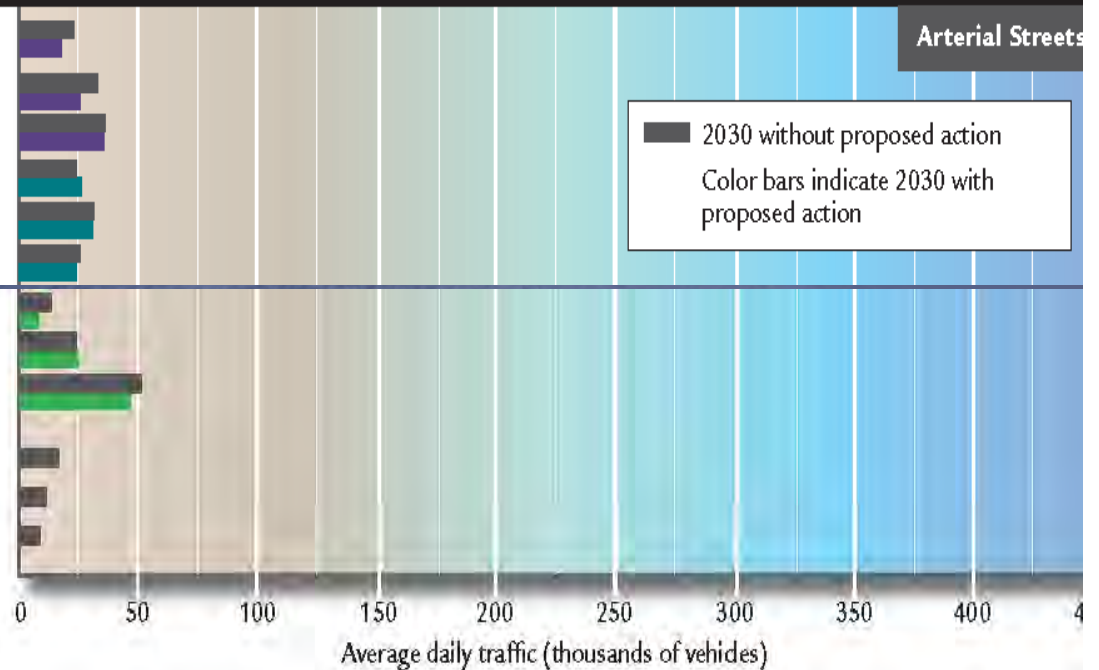


Future traffic conditions- Arterial Streets



51st Avenue	Baseline Road to Dobbins Road	-22
	Buckeye Road to Lower Buckeye Road	-22
	Indian School Road to Thomas Road	-1
67th Avenue	Buckeye Road to Lower Buckeye Road	+8
	Van Buren Street to Buckeye Road	-1
	Thomas Road to McDowell Road	-4
Chandler Boulevard	24th Street to 32nd Street	-36
	40th Street to 48th Street	+2
	48th Street to I-10	-8
Pecos Road	32nd Street to 40th Street	
	Desert Foothills Parkway to 24th Street	
	17th Avenue to Desert Foothills Parkway	

ADT reduction (%)



Traffic - Summary

- The proposed freeway in 2030:
 - adds roadway capacity within the region
 - redistributes traffic from the arterial streets in the No Build Alternative to the freeways in the build alternative
 - reduces the number of vehicles on the majority of arterial streets
 - reduces the number of vehicles on the other freeways with the exception of the Santan between Loop 101 and I-10



Session Feedback Forms & Questions from the Public (time permitting)

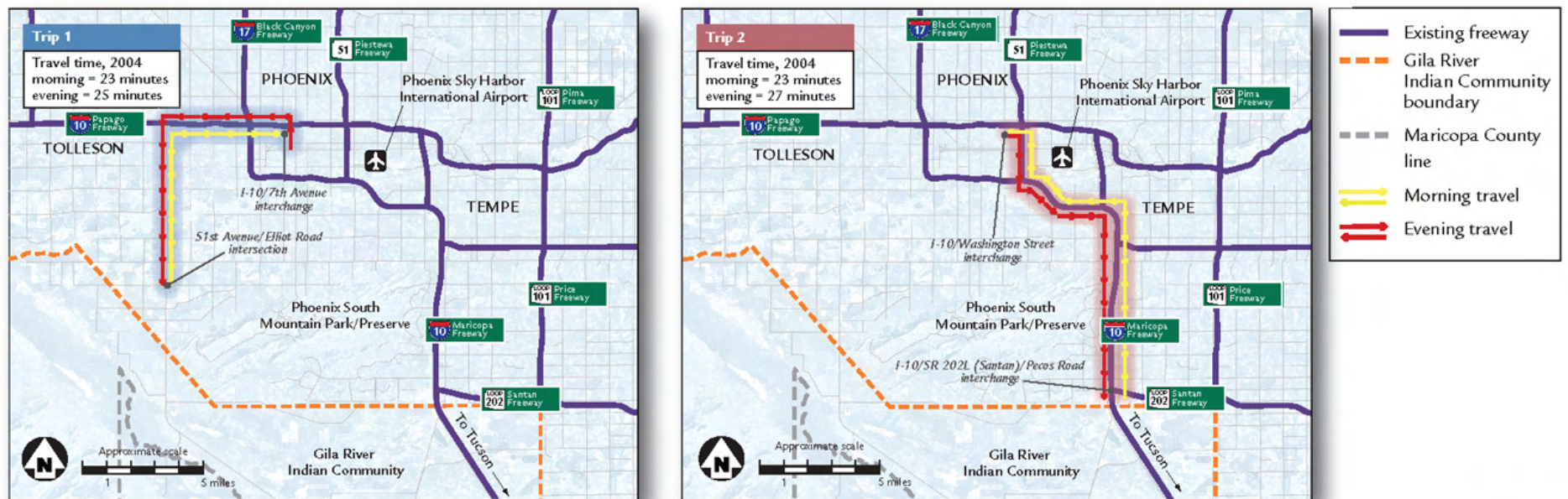
SMCAT Members: Please complete &
submit the Session Feedback forms

Thank You

Additional Materials

Travel Time 2004

Representative Travel Times, 2004

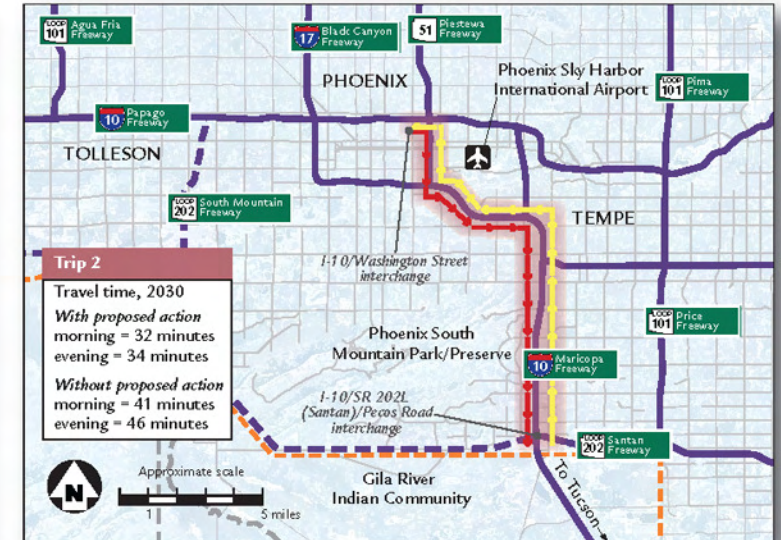
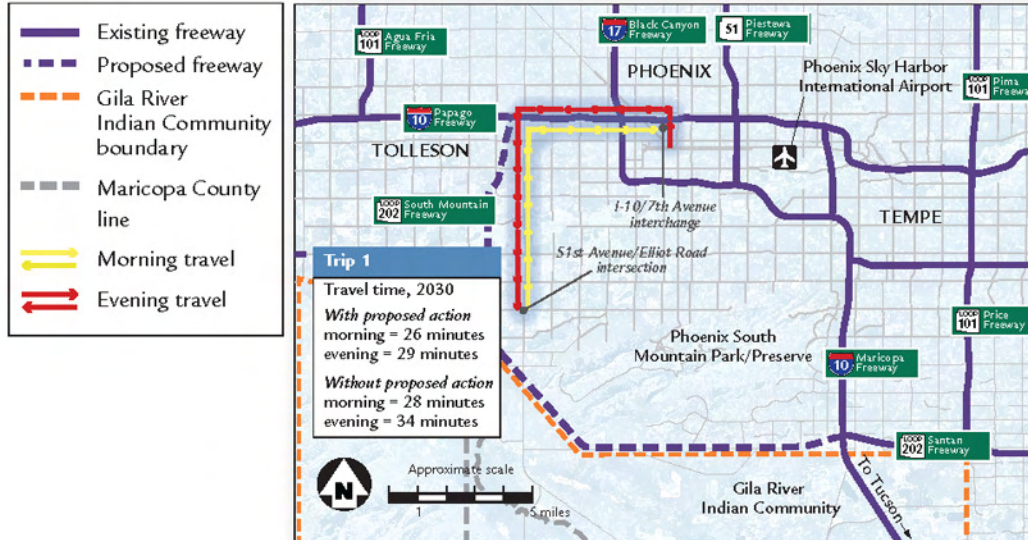


Source: Maricopa Association of Governments, 2006; used with permission

Travel times are averaged over a 3-hour period.

Travel Time 2030

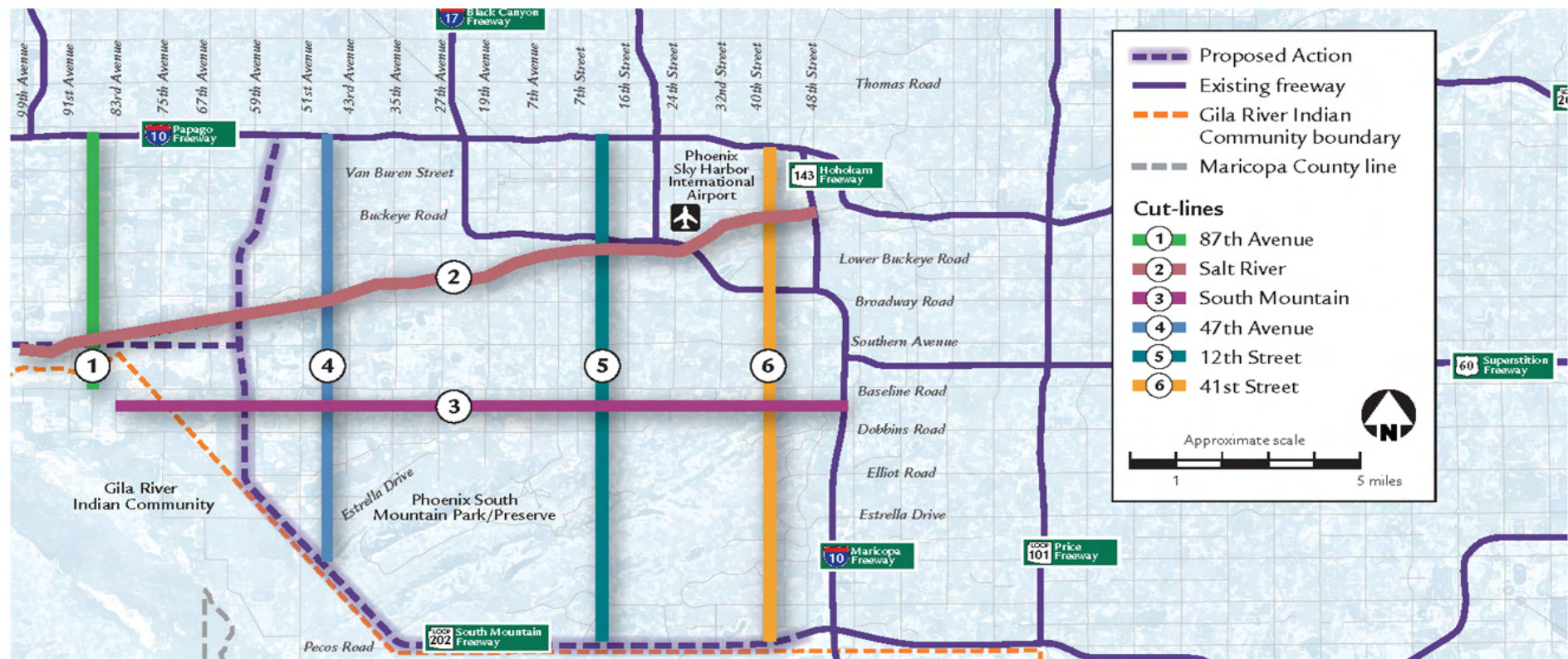
Representative Travel Times, 2030



Source: Maricopa Associations of Governments, 2006; used with permission

Time savings would be experienced during peak travel times of the day. Taken individually, savings may not appear to be substantial, but when considered in the context of the hundreds of thousands of drivers, each day, over the course of 25 years, time savings add up. As indicated in Figure 1-10, travel times are averaged over a 3-hour period.

Cut-line Analysis with and without the Proposed Action, 2030



Cut-line	Alternative	Volume (000s)			Split (%)	
		Total	Freeways	Arterials	Freeway	Arterial
1 87th Avenue: Papago Freeway to Baseline Road	Without proposed action	535	379	156	71	29
	With proposed action	606	502	104	83	17
2 Salt River: 99th Avenue to Hohokam Expressway	Without proposed action	937	596	341	64	34
	With proposed action	1,009	714	295	71	29
3 South Mountain: 83rd Avenue to Maricopa Freeway	Without proposed action	395	262	133	66	34
	With proposed action	498	415	83	84	16
4 47th Avenue: Papago Freeway to Estrella Drive	Without proposed action	581	336	245	58	42
	With proposed action	567	350	217	62	38
5 12th Street: Papago Freeway to South Mountain Freeway	Without proposed action	883	560	323	63	37
	With proposed action	975	697	278	71	29
6 41st Street: Red Mountain Freeway to South Mountain Freeway	Without proposed action	1,111	686	425	62	38
	With proposed action	1,177	821	356	70	30
All six cut-lines	Without proposed action	4,445	2,819	1,623	63	37
	With proposed action	4,833	3,499	1,333	72	28

Source: Maricopa Association of Governments, 2006; used with permission



South Mountain Corridor Study

Citizens Advisory Team
Meeting Summary *(Revised December 3, 2007)*

Date: October 4, 2007
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: South Mountain Community College

CAT Members Attending:

Laurel Arndt, Ahwatukee Village Planning Committee
Sandy Bahr, Sierra Club
Eric Baim, Silverado Ranch HOA
Lisa Bray, South Mountain/Laveen Chamber of Commerce
Al Brown, Arizona Public Health Association
Tamela Daniels, South Mountain Village Planning Committee
Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council
Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce
Derrick Denis, Foothills Reserve HOA
Michael Norton, Laveen Village Planning Committee
Dave Olney, Valley Forward
Laurie Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
John Rodriguez, Lakewood HOA
Jack Sellers, East Valley Partnership
Brian Smith, Calabrea HOA
Timothy Stone, Bougainvillea HOA
Carola Tamarkin, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce
Terry Tatterfield, Kyrene Elementary District
Jim Welch, Mountain Park Ranch HOA

CAT Members Absent:

Camilo Acosta, Arlington HOA
Gila River Indian Community – District 4
Chad Blostone, The Foothills HOA
Clayton Danzeisen, Maricopa County Farm Bureau
David Lafferty, City of Tolleson
Jim McDonald, City of Avondale
Nathaniel Percharo, Pecos Road/I-10 Landowners Association
Dave Williams, Arizona Trucking Association

Staff and Consultants

Timothy Tait, ADOT
Mark Hollowell, ADOT
Michael Bruder, ADOT
Velvet Li, ADOT
Bill Vachon, FHWA

Roger Herzog, MAG
Amy Edwards, HDR
Heather Honsberger, HDR
Mike Book, HDR
Bill Vachon, FHWA
Ron Ober, PDG
Dean Howard, PDG
Joy Butler, PDG
Fred Erickson, KCA
Tom Keller, KCA

Citizens:

Donna Carpenter
Tim Cornelivs
Steve Erickson
Andrew Frankhogo
Jim Jochim
Cathy & Rudy Martinez
Scott Mittelsteadt
Doug Murphy
Jay Pate
William Ramsay
Greta Rogers
Stephanie Russo
Alice Wells

Task/Activity	Who
EIS Process	Mark Hollowell, ADOT
Regional Project Overview	Roger Herzog, MAG
Tank Farm Shift Review of E1 Impacts	Amy Edwards, HDR
Bus Tour Presentation	Tim Tait, ADOT
Visitor Comment Section	Tom Keller, KCA

Tom Keller: Thanks for joining us on a stormy night. We have a full agenda. There are a couple of housekeeping items to mention before we begin.

The trashcans are located by the door and in the corner of the room.

Also, it is important to note that there are many people who work hard to put these meetings together. Please raise your hand if you are a member of the study team from HDR Engineering or Policy Development Group.

On April 15, the Citizens' Advisory Team agreed on the protocol that will govern these meetings. Tonight, our CAT member attendance is 14 people. We have a quorum. Due to time constraints, it has been agreed that these meetings will closely follow the agenda and timeline. I also ask that everyone attending this meeting tonight show respect to the other meeting attendees. Finally, questions from the public will need to be written on the blue question-and-answer cards, which Joy has at the front desk. We make time at the end of each of these meetings so that we can read and answer the public questions.

There have been some requests to see the South Mountain flyover video, which was presented at the last meeting. We have brought that video and it will be running during the break for anyone who wishes to see it.

With that said, we are ready to begin.

Are there any questions from the CAT members that have come about since our last meeting?

(No questions came from the CAT members.)

Now, please take a look at tonight's agenda. Are there any questions on any of the agenda items?

(No questions came from the CAT members.)

As you can see, the first agenda item is a presentation from Mark Hollowell with ADOT's Environmental Planning Group, who will be discussing the contents of a typical Environmental Impact Statement or EIS.

Mark Hollowell: I am Mark Hollowell. I will try to get through everything quickly because I know that some of you would like to watch the baseball game.

I would like to make you familiar with the National Environmental Policy Act process. The United States Congress enacted the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, in 1969. The law applies only to federal agencies and the programs they fund. Essentially it requires that, prior to taking any major or significant action, the agency must consider any environmental impacts of that action. NEPA requires that an EIS must include: the environmental impacts of the proposed action; unavoidable adverse environmental impacts; alternatives including no action; the relationship between short term uses of the environment and maintenance of long-term ecological productivity; irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; and secondary/cumulative effects of implementing the proposed action. During the development of the EIS, public involvement is an important component.

As you know, this is a federal project and it has been determined that this project will require the development of an EIS. The EIS considers potential project impacts that the

action will have on the social, economic, and physical environment. It includes interagency cooperation and public participation as fundamental objectives to this process. And the EIS documents the potential project impacts and mitigation measures.

This next slide shows all the policies, standards, and acts, which must be considered to ensure that the EIS will be in compliance with NEPA regulations. We are calling this the “NEPA Compliance Umbrella”. As you look at the “Umbrella”, you begin to understand how comprehensive the EIS must be.

There are three levels of NEPA documentation. Categorical Exclusions, or CEs, are developed when the proposed action does not significantly affect the environment. Environmental Assessments, or EAs, are developed when the significance of the proposed action is not yet known. EIS are developed when it is known that there will be a significant effect at some level. An EIS is being developed for the proposed South Mountain Freeway because it is known that there will be significant impacts. All of these documents, CEs, EAs, and EISs, are all evaluating the same issues—air quality, hazardous materials, and cultural impacts, for example.

The next slide shows what information is contained in a typical EIS. There is an established purpose and need, Section 4(f) evaluation, and a list of agencies, organizations, and persons to whom copies of the EIS are sent. For the South Mountain Freeway EIS, it is safe to assume that there will be a section documenting all communication with the Gila River Indian Community.

The EIS process began with scoping of various agencies to ask them their thoughts on the proposed project. Based on information gathered during the scoping process, the study team then established the purpose and need. After the identification and evaluation of alternatives, 55th Avenue was identified as ADOT’s recommended alternative in the Western Section. In the Eastern Section, as you know, the purpose of this CAT is to evaluate the Pecos Road alignment and the no-build option.

The Draft EIS has been through several reviews with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG). Both agencies have been giving us comments on the Draft. Most recently, the document was sent to the FHWA’s Arizona Division for a final review before it will be sent to their Legal Sufficiency Division in San Francisco.

There is a big list of environmental consequences that is taken into account when developing the EIS. Many of these issues are addressed in the CAT meetings for your review. The technical documents for the analysis are available online on the South Mountain Freeway Web site. Some of the items addressed are air quality, floodplains, hazardous materials, cultural resources, and economic issues.

The status of the EIS is as follows:

- 2005–ADOT and FHWA compiled data into the technical reports
- 2006–ADOT and FHWA worked to develop the Administrative Draft EIS

- 2007–ADOT, FHWA, and MAG reviewed the Administrative Draft EIS
- most recently ADOT submitted the Draft EIS to FHWA’s Arizona Division

If there are changes from FHWA’s Legal Sufficiency Division, the Draft will be sent back to FHWA’s Arizona Division and eventually make its way back to ADOT. At this time, ADOT will prepare the Draft EIS for public review. When the Draft is ready for public review, CDs and printed copies will be made available at ADOT, local libraries, and several FedEx/Kinko’s locations. According to federal law, the Draft EIS will have a minimum public review period of 45 days. Two public hearings will be held, each of which will be at a different location in the study area with at least 15 days notice to the public. The public hearings will be announced through mailings to the project mailing list, newspaper notices, and information on the project Web site. At the end of the public comment period, ADOT and FHWA will begin addressing the comments and preparing the Final EIS.

In addition to the content already addressed in the Draft EIS, the Final EIS will also incorporate several things. It will identify the recommended alternative for the entire corridor. It will include all substantive public and agency comments received during the comment period. It will summarize all public involvement activities. It will describe any mitigation measures needed based on public and agency comments received. And it will discuss compliance with all applicable environmental laws and executive orders.

ADOT will then submit the Final EIS to FHWA for a final legal sufficiency review. If approved, FHWA will sign and date the cover page. A Record of Decision, or ROD, would be issued by FHWA no sooner than 30 days after of the Final EIS notice in the *Federal Register*. The ROD will identify whether the build or no-build alternative is selected, or if more analysis is needed.

At this time, are there any questions?

CAT Question: I am confused. If you have already compiled the Draft EIS, where does the CAT fit into the process?

Mark Hollowell: The purpose of this CAT is to make the recommendation for the Eastern Section of this proposed freeway—whether the freeway should be constructed on the Pecos Road alignment or if it should be a no-build situation. After the Draft EIS has been released for public review, the recommendation from the CAT and substantive public comments will be evaluated and will be considered in the Final EIS.

CAT Comment: I don’t like your answer. This sounds like a moot point. You aren’t going to substantially change the Final EIS. We might give a different recommendation that could be dismissed.

Mark Hollowell: Everything is considered. We aren’t dismissing any items. We will be soliciting input from the public on the Draft EIS as well as any other issues they might

have. ADOT is evaluating the impact of a no-build situation and how this would affect the purpose and need.

CAT Question: How do you know you have evaluated the full range of alternatives?

Mark Hollowell: ADOT originally evaluated over 30 alternatives to get to the point where we are now.

CAT Question: What is a “substantive” comment?

Bill Vachon: All comments received are addressed and taken into consideration—some comments have more information while others are pointed. Those comments that identify specific issues take more time to evaluate. But all comments are addressed.

CAT Question: Earlier in this project, I seem to remember a mathematical error in a conclusion that was reached by ADOT. How is this addressed?

Bill Vachon: If there are any errors, we need to know about it. Any errors will be addressed.

CAT Question: Are we going to get the Draft EIS anytime soon?

Mark Hollowell: We don’t know exactly. The review process has so many variables that at this point the date can’t be determined. FHWA’s Legal Sufficiency Division has told the study team that they cannot estimate the timeframe for their review of the Draft EIS until they have a copy of it in their hands. Because of this, we just don’t know the timeframe. So at this time, we are estimating it to be released for public review at some point in 2008.

CAT Question: I think what that CAT member is trying to say is that one of the slides that was just shown to us shows that there is a large amount of content that will be included in the Final EIS. There was nothing that gives us an idea about the content located in the Draft EIS besides the formatting of the document. The CAT is lacking on most of the technical reports, such as the environmental comments on air quality and noise. If we haven’t seen this information, then how is this information already located in the Draft EIS?

Mark Hollowell: All technical reports go into the Draft EIS. ADOT has been giving the summaries of the draft reports to you. In the Draft EIS, all the information that is given covers each issue in great detail.

CAT Comment: From what I have seen on the air quality issue, the information was not sufficient. I am antsy to see the Draft EIS chapter that covers this issue. The CAT hasn’t been shown anything on the possible design of this potential freeway. The community wants to see more from a design standpoint. How that is going to be addressed and the impact on the mountain will be interesting to see. I haven’t received any substantive answers on my concerns so I am a little leery about what will be contained in the Draft EIS.

Amy Edwards: What I would like to do now is talk about what you want to hear and what your timeframes are. Some of the items that we will be discussing in upcoming CAT meetings include the topics in which you are interested. The design issues will need to be discussed in one whole meeting. This meeting will cover the tunneling issues versus open cut and what the area affects would be. Wildlife connectivity is also an issue regarding design. At that point, the CAT would have a discussion on those issues. When we discuss air quality, ADOT is going to arrange to have a general panel of specialists at a CAT meeting, where you will be able to get some of your questions answered. It is planned that this would need to be after the issuance of the Draft EIS. Then you will get all of the technical information. After the Draft EIS is released to the public, the CAT will be able to discuss anything in the document.

CAT Question: Are you talking about the Draft EIS that is currently with FHWA's Arizona Division?

Amy Edwards: Yes.

CAT Question: So what went to FHWA did not include all of this information?

Amy Edwards: All of the information was included in the Draft EIS and did go to FHWA. There are legal issues with releasing the information that has been included in the Draft EIS until it is ready for the public to review. In the Draft EIS, the Westside Section recommendation is for 55th Avenue, but there is not a recommendation for the Eastern Section. ADOT is using ongoing communication with the CAT and the public to see what else may be incorporated.

CAT Comment: You keep inferring that we have looked at the technical data when the CAT was reviewing the Western Section. But at that time, all the data on the Eastern Section was withheld. You can't say that this group has made any decisions on this. When we make our decision it doesn't go to FHWA—it only goes to the Director of ADOT and he waits for the politicians to tell him what to do.

Amy Edwards: You can recommend your selected alternative to whomever you wish to send your recommendation. By the way, there have been projects, where input on the Draft EIS resulted in identification of a different alternative as the recommended one in the Final EIS.

CAT Question: Can you give us an example of this?

Amy Edwards: Legacy Parkway is one example.

CAT Comment: In the summary document that you gave us at the last CAT meeting, I have issues about where you got the wording for the Eastern Section alternative. If this is the identical wording that was used in the Draft EIS, I have major concerns. Some of the Eastern Section issues are downplayed and is reported that there are no impacts. I can't

believe that this item was published and given to us as a draft when there are obvious conflicts.

Amy Edwards: That is an agenda item for later tonight. Please hold your question for later.

Tom Keller: At this time, please make a note of any further questions you may have.

I have a couple of housekeeping items. There is one person sitting in on behalf of another member. (Person introduced). Thank you for joining us. Is there anyone else who is here representing another regular CAT member?

(No response came from the CAT members.)

At this point we have another presentation by Roger Herzog, who will be discussing the Regional Transportation Plan.

Roger Herzog: I am Roger Herzog, a project manager with MAG. I am here to give you an overview on the Regional Transportation Plan and how it works with the proposed South Mountain Freeway corridor.

The Regional Transportation Plan, or RTP, covers a 20-year planning horizon. In fact, it covers a great number of items, such as traffic system operations, intelligent transportation systems, and safety. It is usually identified with improvements to the transportation system itself.

The long-range regional freeway plan includes new corridors, such as Loop 303, State Route 801, and Williams Gateway Freeway. It also includes adding lanes to existing freeways, both general purpose and high-occupancy vehicle. There are also plans for adding new traffic interchanges on existing freeways that would connect with arterial streets and ramps at various locations, such as between Interstate 17 and Interstate 10. There is currently a traffic interchange at State Route 51 and Loop 101 that is under construction.

The RTP calls for improvements to Interstate 10 from State Route 85 to Loop 303. The stretch from Verrado Way to Loop 303 funding was advanced by the State Legislature in 2006 and should be starting construction shortly. Also between Loop 303 and Loop 101, there will be the addition of a high-occupancy vehicle lane and a general purpose lane so this stretch will contain four general purpose lanes and one high-occupancy lane in each direction. Along I-10, there are plans to add an additional general purpose lane in each direction from Loop 101 to Interstate 17. In the East Valley, looking at Interstate 10 at the stretch from U.S. 60 to the Loop 202, the RTP calls for the addition of a general-purpose lane and a high-occupancy vehicle lane in each direction. On the stretch from Loop 202 to Riggs Road, one general purpose and one high-occupancy lane will be added. There is also a project in the works to create a better design that will allow traffic that is exiting and entering along Interstate 10 and U.S. 60 to flow better.

Looking at some of the other facilities in the Valley, the Loop 303 will be a totally new facility that will be constructed from Interstate 17 to the proposed State Route 801. State Route 801 itself is called for in the RTP. Loop 202 on the east side of Interstate 10 will also be improved with one general purpose and one high-occupancy vehicle lane in each direction.

The current traffic system, as you can see, is going to be improved quite a bit. The Southwest Valley has quite a bit of new corridors plus the widening of existing freeways.

The RTP contains long-range planning for the arterial street system. These projects are funded from regional section sources such as local governments and Maricopa County. These include things like the widening of arterial streets, intersection improvements, signal timing, and traffic control. A few of these projects include major upgrading, such as the widening of Northern Avenue and the construction of the Rio Salado Parkway.

The RTP includes plans for an expanded transit system. Shortly, 31 Rapid Transit bus routes will be added into the transportation system. There will also be Rapid Transit bus routes added to the arterial street system that will make less stops so that people can get to their destinations faster. It is planned that over the next 5 years, 11 of these Rapid Transit arterial bus routes will be added. This slide shows the 32 arterial bus routes, which will be implemented in the Valley over the next 20 years. Most of these additional routes are in service already. The key things that this bus system would provide is service on a reliable basis. Since this funding is on a regional basis, it could be delayed if there were local funding issues.

Lastly, the Valley will have the addition of the light rail system. On the slide, the red component system is under construction now. It is estimated that in December of 2008, it will be available for the public to begin using. There is also planning for an additional 37 miles of light rail extensions, which will allow users more areas in which to use the light rail system.

Other studies that MAG is currently completing are: a commuter rail study on such corridors as Grand Avenue and along the current Union Pacific rail line in the Southwest Valley, the Transportation Framework Study, the Interstate 10/Hassayampa Study, and the Interstate 8/Hidden Valley Study. Most of these studies will be completed shortly and are a joint effort to identify the future network of transportation facilities. In many of these areas, MAG is coordinating with developers so that the Valley transportation system can stay ahead of the development. Right now, many of the areas that MAG is looking into are not heavily populated, but are experiencing much development pressure.

Are there any questions?

CAT Question: There are over 600 homes in Ahwatukee, which seems to be excluded from the maps [bus rapid transit] you just showed us. Why is this? How can I change that?

CAT Comment: It appears that the Town of Laveen has been left out as well.

Roger Herzog: What I have shown has the informational grid plus the regional transportation system map. I couldn't guarantee what the nature of the service would be. I can follow up on your question.

CAT Question: Can you address the pedestrian and bicycle aspects of the RTP?

Roger Herzog: The RTP has an element, which is a regional bicycle plan. The specific funding has been identified over the 20-year timeframe for adding facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

CAT Question: Will the funding dollar amount be increasing over time?

Roger Herzog: Yes, the funding is locked in for the next 20 years.

CAT Question: Has the Gila River Indian Community been participating in the development of the RTP?

Roger Herzog: There are members from the Gila River Indian Community who belong to MAG's Regional Council. There has been contact with them so that their input has been incorporated into the RTP.

CAT Question: At last month's CAT meeting, it was stated that the Gila River Indian Community wasn't taken into account when doing the planning for the RTP.

Roger Herzog: The RTP has taken into account such issues as population and employment on the Gila River Indian Community lands so there isn't a gap in the planning.

CAT Comment: At the last meeting, we were told that the Gila River Indian Community has not released their development planning to MAG. So in their case, MAG had to use zero as the basis for the data.

Bill Vachon: What was said at the last meeting was that if the Gila River Indian Community doesn't give us their planning information, we can't speculate what will be going on with their growth. We may use the current population numbers but we can not make any assumptions as to where their development might occur.

CAT Comment: That's what I am saying. MAG can't guess where their development will occur so they are using zero for the data.

Bill Vachon: We can't tell them to give us the information. They have to voluntarily give us the information we use.

CAT Question: Do you all have a copy of what information the Gila River Indian Community has given to assist in the planning for the RTP? They have given it to Intel and others.

Bill Vachon: I don't have a copy of the information.

Roger Herzog: I am not sure if we have one.

CAT Question: What about the growth in Casa Grande? Has Pinal County given you their current data? There are no business centers south of the Valley so that everyone who has a job has to make the drive along Interstate 10 into Maricopa County, unless the people want to work at Jack in the Box.

Hunt Highway is another crowded stretch that people travel daily to get to work. One time at Hunt Highway and Power Road, I counted 300 cars, while waiting at a stoplight. All of those people have to feed into the transportation system to get to work. The Town of Gilbert may have certain roads that they want to make better, but it appears that Val Vista Drive isn't one of them.

Roger Herzog: The RTP doesn't represent all the local needs.

CAT Comment: All drivers get off on the streets that they need to access where they live. It seems that many of these local street improvements are not being upgraded by anyone. I don't think their numbers are being reflected in your data.

Roger Herzog: The commuter data is part of our modeling database. With the anticipated growth in Pinal County, the modeling is taking into account a population of 900,000 people in Pinal County.

CAT Question: Did you tell your computers that all those people go to Maricopa County for work?

Roger Herzog: It is estimated that a certain percentage would be traveling to Maricopa County for work each day.

CAT Question: If the CAT recommendation for the South Mountain Freeway is no-build would MAG consider doing enhanced transit options for the area? What would be the process?

Roger Herzog: I wouldn't want to conjecture on this. The RTP funding has already been designated with a specific amount of money to be funded for specific portions of the RTP. To move money around at this point would not be possible.

CAT Comment: It would be possible to move the money, but you would have to change the law.

Roger Herzog: Yes.

Tom Keller: Roger Herzog's PowerPoint presentation that you just viewed is not in your packet. It will be published on the project Web site and can be sent to you as well, if you request it.

We are now ready for our break. When we come back, we will be discussing the tank farm shift and its impacts on the project.

(BREAK)

Tom Keller: Has anyone seen Clayton recently? Last I had heard, he was awaiting the birth of his grandchild. Has anyone heard any information on this?

(No response came from the CAT members.)

Tom Keller: In a minute, Amy Edwards will be discussing the tank farm shift with you. First, I wanted to mention that we currently have 14 people confirmed for the October 20 bus tour of the South Mountain Freeway study area.

CAT Comment: I originally put a question mark as to whether I would be attending, but now I am sure that I will be attending.

Tom Keller: I will be taking another tally shortly to confirm attendance.

Fred Erickson: The flyover aerial video will be on the Web site shortly for anyone who wishes to access it.

Amy Edwards: Earlier in tonight's meeting I mentioned the future CAT meeting topics. I have the information on this sheet that I am passing around. This is the current plan, but the agendas for these future meetings are completely up to you. If you see something that you think should be discussed, but you don't see it on this list, be sure to let us know. As you can see, the current plan for the next meeting is to discuss traffic, the following meeting we will be discussing the profile options, and the final meeting we will have a discussion about general air quality. Around the third or fourth meeting from now is when the Draft EIS should be ready to be released to the public for review. Each of the CAT members will receive a copy. This document will contain the details on the Eastern and Western sections and the no-build.

CAT Question: When we receive the Draft EIS, will the public have it as well or will we be getting copies in advance?

Amy Edwards: For legal reasons, the public will have access to this document when you receive your copies.

CAT Question: Will this open up the discussion for the Western Section?

Amy Edwards: It depends what you mean by discussion. ADOT is always taking public comment, but as far as this group is concerned, in the Western Section, 55th Avenue is the alternative. This CAT is convened to discuss the Pecos Road Alternative versus the no-build.

CAT Question: If the Draft EIS is delayed again, will we continue having these meetings?

Amy Edwards: All the details for the air quality issues are described in the Draft so we would need to wait to discuss issues, such as this, until you all can review it. We would like you to have an opportunity to review the contents of the Draft EIS before we hold discussions on these types of issues.

CAT Question: Why can't we have discussions about air quality without the Draft EIS? It seems like there already is information available that could be used.

Amy Edwards: Our intent was to split up the air quality issue discussion between two CAT meetings. The first meeting having the air quality discussion would cover the overall issues related to freeways. The second meeting would cover the air quality issues specific to this project. This matter is still open for discussion.

CAT Question: Why can't you do this until the Draft EIS is released?

Bill Vachon: There are different options that are being addressed so the study team has been advised by FHWA's Legal Sufficiency Division that we are not to release this information until they are satisfied with the content.

CAT Question: Then the Draft EIS should not be released. Can't they approve certain sections so that we can review the issues and comment on them before the Draft is released?

Bill Vachon: The Legal Sufficiency Division won't look at anything until there is a complete Draft EIS for them to review.

CAT Question: Can we send an invitation to Victor Mendez to attend and spend some time with us at a future CAT meeting?

Amy Edwards: I don't know what the process would be to do this.

Tom Keller: If that is the will of the body we can move on that.

CAT Comment: He should come and answer some of our questions. I think it would be beneficial for him to be seen working with the people on this project. I have a couple of questions for him and I am sure the new members have questions.

Tom Keller: Should he attend a certain meeting that would be more beneficial?

CAT Comment: He should attend sooner rather than later.

CAT Comment: I think he should attend the CAT meeting right before the Draft EIS is released.

CAT Comment: Yes, I agree.

CAT Comment: I think we should have a summary list of topics, so that when he comes, we can discuss those issues that are most important to us.

Amy Edwards: Such as air quality?

CAT Comment: It seems like one of the main issues is with air quality.

CAT Question: So can we send Victor Mendez an invitation?

CAT Comment: The invitation should be for him to attend before our third upcoming meeting.

Tom Keller: Is there a motion and a second?

CAT Comment: The ADOT Director's expertise may not be in the environmental area.

CAT Comment: We would be discussing a wide range of issues.

Tom Keller: All in favor?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Tom Keller: The motion carries 13 to 2.

CAT Comment: For our CAT meeting where there will be a discussion on the traffic issues, I would like to see a formal invitation extended to the Gila River Indian Community to present their long-range planning. I understand that we can't force them to make this presentation, but I would like us to send an invitation. I don't think anyone from the GRIC is here tonight.

Timothy Tait: They were here at the last CAT meeting.

CAT Comment: I mean tonight.

Tom Keller: Is there is a motion on the floor?

CAT Comment: I am making a motion that prior to our CAT meeting, where traffic will be discussed, we send an invitation for a representative from the GRIC to give a presentation to us regarding their long-range traffic planning concept.

Tom Keller: You would just like the presentation on traffic planning or all planning?

CAT Comment: All planning.

CAT Comment: Motion.

CAT Comment: Second.

Tom Keller: Would you like to have a discussion?

CAT Comment: It is a shame that the GRIC does not have a representative here on the CAT.

Tim Tait: I would like to clarify that the GRIC does have two positions on the CAT.

CAT Comment: I know that.

CAT Question: What is our official word about membership regarding no shows?

Tom Keller: If any member fails to attend 65% of the scheduled meeting the CAT can vote to have that member replaced. The people not in attendance at the CAT meetings still get the same phone calls and harassment as you.

CAT Question: You send this information only to the two representatives on the CAT?

Tom Keller: Yes, we send the information only to the two representatives.

CAT Comment: Maybe the invitation should be sent to the Planning Director.

Amy Edwards: ADOT has been in communication with GRIC staff and elected officials.

CAT Comment: Whoever needs to be in attendance should be invited.

Tom Keller: Is there a motion? Second? All in favor, all opposed?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: There are 17 votes for and 0 against.

Tom Keller: Motion passes.

CAT Question: Can we discuss the alternatives summary that was distributed at the last CAT meeting?

Amy Edwards: Maybe we can hold that for the E1 discussion.

CAT Comment: The CAT meeting topics should cover the most critical issues. In the Western Section, floodplains were a major issue. There are a variety of topics that should be addressed in these meetings discussing the Eastern Section.

Amy Edwards: There is a large amount of information in the CAT summary and in the alternatives matrix. The CAT should have a separate meeting to address these issues. It is up to you how you want to proceed.

CAT Comment: There was a great amount of information in the items you described. When we were meeting on the Western Section alternatives, much of the discussion on the Eastern Section alternative issues was tabled. I don't feel that many of these topics were adequately discussed. Some things, such as land use is not as much of a concern. I think; however, the environmental concerns are extremely important. For us to only talk about the design and tunnel cuts just doesn't cut it. The Eastern Section meetings have been moving forward at a very fast pace. Our group has been waiting for some in-depth discussions about some of these issues, which we have not been getting and I feel that it has been a real disservice to the whole process. Some of the issues we should discuss are floodplains, air quality, biology, topography, cultural issues, and visual impacts.

Amy Edwards: The topics discussed in these meetings are completely up to the CAT members.

CAT Comment: I would also like to have a discussion on geology and soils, and irreversible retrieval of natural resources.

Tom Keller: Is there any more discussion on this matter?

CAT Question: Do you see these issues being discussed in one meeting or more?

Amy Edwards: For the issues regarding the mountain ridges and proposed cuts, I wonder if what we are showing as topics for the second upcoming CAT meeting should encompass what is happening with that issue. Maybe at the next CAT meeting, we should propose a series of additional meetings to you to discuss these additional issues that have been mentioned.

Tom Keller: So there is a motion that we take the additional issues mentioned and have additional CAT meetings to cover these topics?

Amy Edwards: We would get a list of additional issues back to you for approval.

CAT Comment: I would like to have a discussion about groundwater and hydrology.

Amy Edwards: Did you mean groundwater or surface water?

CAT Comment: I would like to discuss TCE plume groundwater contamination. I understand one of the cities just shut some wells down.

Tom Keller: Is there any other discussion?

CAT Question: Is there any room to discuss mitigation efforts? Can we discuss these items before the Draft EIS is released?

Amy Edwards: We haven't found out a way to release the Draft EIS potential mitigation options to the group for discussion.

CAT Comment: There has to be some preliminary work that could be discussed, such as a depressed freeway and drainage. We have already heard that a below-grade design would need to remove 750 homes. We should be able to discuss how this would impact the area.

Amy Edwards: The intention was to discuss that at a future CAT meeting.

CAT Question: I think another discussion item would be utilities that follow the proposed alignment and what would be impacted. Does this fall under mitigation?

Amy Edwards: That is a cost to the project.

CAT Question: I would just turn that issue over to the group. What about displacement and relocation?

CAT Comment: We should have a discussion about utility costs and incorporate this into an additional session.

CAT Question: I don't think it should be about costs, but more about the impacts. Is one more meeting going to be enough or should we have two more?

Tom Keller: We would come back with the issues you decide and have a logical plan to lay these meetings out. Are there any other issues?

CAT Comment: A discussion on utilities wouldn't be one of my biggest issues.

Tom Keller: Any more discussion on utilities?

CAT Question: It seems that when there is a discussion about cutting into the mountain, the subject of groundwater would come up. Wouldn't it?

Amy Edwards: The issues there would be water and power lines versus groundwater. The water lines are in the easement and we would not be in the easement.

CAT Comment: I think that should all be in the discussion regarding the mountain ridge and the cut. We can't avoid the conversation about why the alternative would be located there.

Tom Keller: The motion has been to bring additional topics to additional meetings.

CAT Question: Are you guys going to look at the increasing urban heat island? I think there should be a discussion on this. The urban heat island is changing the weather. Can this be a meeting topic?

Tom Keller: There is a motion for additional topics.

CAT Comment: One item is groundwater resources.

CAT Comment: Hydrology should be a topic discussion.

Tom Keller: What about utilities?

CAT Comment: I think that would fall under a discussion about the proposed freeway design.

CAT Comment: I would like to include having a discussion on the urban heat island and the design mitigation components.

Tom Keller: We have a motion to amend the future CAT meeting schedule based on the various issues recently discussed. All those in favor? All opposed?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: 18 votes for and 0 opposed.

Tom Keller: At this point I would like to announce that Boy Scout Troup 77 from Ahwatukee has joined us. They are learning about public service. Welcome.

Amy Edwards: I am now going to give you an update about what happened with ADOT's recommendation of the South Mountain Freeway being aligned at 55th Avenue and Interstate 10 in the Western Section.

The study team had some discussion with business owners and with the tank farm. The tank farm handles and distributes fuel for the airport. Here is a picture of the tank farm.

(Picture of Tank Farm shown to CAT members)

The business owners that we talked with owned land between 51st and 57th avenues and Van Buren Street and the Union Pacific rail lines. The discussions covered a couple of

issues. If the South Mountain Freeway alignment would go through the original alignment, safety would be an issue with it being so close to the tank farms. Another issue was that of security with the explosive jet fuel being so close to a potential freeway. Finally, the original freeway alignment would also be taking away the last developable land in the area. As you can see, there were many concerns. It was decided that there should be a more detailed analysis to see the options.

We were able to shift the proposed alignment 400 feet to remedy the concerns. Before doing this, we looked at the wide range of impacts that Mark Hollowell talked about earlier. One concern of the study team was that traffic operations would remain the same.

We had to be sensitive to the developed businesses that have been in place for quite some time. The construction costs would be essentially the same. The right-of-way costs would be higher. We had to consider the economic businesses of displaced companies. There could be five or six businesses that might be collocated in a property or quite a few more. We worked with the city and state departments of Homeland Security with their concerns about security and future development around the tank farm. We discovered that in the long term, this shift of the proposed freeway alignment suited the plan better. You will have a chance to see the background information for this shift when the Draft EIS is made available to you. Are there any questions?

CAT Question: It looks like the tank farm should be listed as a potentially hazardous site. Is it?

Amy Edwards: Most of what is showing up in the hazardous materials reports are sites that have had issues in the past, but have since been remediated. The technical summaries with this information are on the Web site.

CAT Question: On the aerial map you showed, can you see any of the fuel tanks?

Amy Edwards: On this blowup you can see the tanks. Here is one and there are a large number further to the east.

CAT Question: How close would they potentially be to the South Mountain Freeway?

Amy Edwards: I am unsure of the exact distance.

CAT Question: What would be the approximate distance that someone traveling in a car would be to the fuel tanks?

Amy Edwards: They would be about a block away.

CAT Question: There wouldn't be any tank displacements?

Amy Edwards: There are no planned tank displacements.

CAT Question: For those who don't know, these fuel tanks are bigger around than this room. The closest one to the proposed alignment contains Jet-A fuel. With this shift in the alignment, how many more businesses would be taken?

Amy Edwards: That is included in this total. (gesture to summary table on screen)

CAT Question: What happens when the number of lanes on the interchange is increased?

Amy Edwards: This has been included in our numbers. (gesture to summary table on screen)

CAT Question: On this section of I-10, the number of lanes seems to keep increasing. Will you be able to remain in the original footprint?

Amy Edwards: We haven't changed the amount of right-of-way needed. However, ADOT has initiated a project to look at this section of I-10 and identify long term needs. Are there any other questions?

(No response came from the CAT members.)

Tom Keller: We are 15 minutes behind.

Amy Edwards: Now I would like to discuss the E1 impacts. The matrix that was given to you during the discussion of the development of the SMCAT recommendation for the Western Section preferred alternative only contained the information for the Western Section. Since we are moving forward, we also wanted to give you something that has information on the E1 alternative. So this is the same information that you had before plus the E1 information. All of this information comes from the technical report summaries. You can access them from the Web site to see the detailed information. On the Web site, we have a summary of air quality that was presented to you when we were discussing the Western Section alternatives. However, this information is dated. Since that time, we have gathered more information.

CAT Comment: It would be better to have the summary so we could at least have some open discussions about it. The air quality summary needs to be updated and given to us.

Tom Keller: Is there a motion? Is there a second? All those for and all those against?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: 16 vote for and 0 opposed.

Tom Keller: Motion passes.

CAT Comment: I didn't get this last time. I am concerned about this document having the Eastern Section alternative. I take great exception to some of these statements that are listed. I just want to know where this document is going to end up. I know we can't change the outcome but some of these statements of impact are not vetted out properly. I am trying to decide how this information will make its way to the Draft EIS. It is not accurate.

Amy Edwards: Anything we give to you is a public document.

CAT Question: Are these 10 pages ready to be rolled into the Draft EIS?

Amy Edwards: These pages are not in the Draft EIS.

CAT Comment: I don't care about the format. I care about the content. The content of this document makes it look like it is a slam dunk. Some of these statements can be challenged.

Amy Edwards: This document has gone through several reviews.

CAT Comment: My concern is whether these 10 pages are going into the Draft EIS.

CAT Comment: I think the concern is with the tone of the content and whether this will be reflected in the Draft EIS especially since this hasn't been discussed by our group. The content and tone is not reflective of the community.

CAT Question: When they say that is the impact. What about the discussion on visual resources? It doesn't discuss the level of impact. Every action taken for this freeway has an impact and this doesn't mention the level.

Tom Keller: Are you making a motion for how the document will be used going forward?

CAT Comment: The statements are very simplistic. There could be repercussions about our interests.

CAT Question: Can you evaluate that before there is a freeway design?

CAT Question: Can we withdraw this document from the public record?

Tom Keller: Where is this document currently located?

Amy Edwards: This is a summary document distributed to the CAT members for discussion purposes.

CAT Question: Is this in the Draft EIS?

Amy Edwards: Not word for word.

CAT Question: Is this content in the Draft EIS?

Amy Edwards: There is a summary of impacts in the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS has the complete documentation of how that summary was developed.

CAT Comment: The tone and extent of this analysis is not a documentation of the impact.

CAT Question: Can't we have another meeting and update this document with new answers? Most of the CAT members have been in the group longer than me. I understand that you can be frustrated about putting off the information and about the way this document is worded.

CAT Comment: The meeting to discuss this was after the fact and that is the frustration.

Amy Edwards: Would you like to discuss the tone of the Western Section as well as the Eastern Section? This was generated as a summary of the facts from our analysis. If you want to change the tone of what's listed in the E1 alternative then it will need to be done for the Western Section as well.

CAT Comment: I think that we are representing the public so we would like to see some documentation.

Amy Edwards: If you want to do your own work on this document and have it included as part of the DEIS—that is fine.

Tom Keller: Would you like to bring this forward as a motion?

CAT Comment: Yes.

CAT Comment: There are those individuals that have been doing this for awhile. It may be worth it for those who want to do this to draft something and bring it forward at another meeting.

CAT Question: When referencing this, were you looking at the visual quality? No one from the town of Laveen had any concerns about the visual impact. In my view, it is laid out identical. All they did was duplicate the text. I don't think they imposed any tone or lack of tone.

CAT Comment: I have the same problem with the visual quality. I represent a community which values what goes south of us.

CAT Comment: We call it the serpent.

Tom Keller: I am going to put a stop to this so the meeting doesn't go long. There are several motions out there. One is the motion of document being changed by the CAT. Would this be acceptable?

CAT Comment: This issue is that the summaries for the E1 alternatives have not been released and that these summaries were developed without the input from this group.

Tom Keller: When we cover the E1 alternatives, we can focus on that issue and document the specifics.

CAT Comment: We can do that, but our problem is that our input will not be a part of the Draft EIS.

Tom Keller: I can't answer that.

We are on to the last topic of the evening—the bus tour. I have a few logistical items to discuss with you. Fifteen CAT members have indicated that they will be attending. Is this correct? If you are one of the ones who haven't responded yet, please do so as soon as possible. I understand that a few people are still unsure if they will be attending, but if you do know if you can or can't attend and haven't responded, let us know tonight.

Fred Erickson: Please respond to us if you would like to participate in the hike, which will be a part of the bus tour, as well.

Timothy Tait: The bus tour is scheduled for Saturday, October 20. The bus will be leaving from our ADOT office at 17th Avenue and Madison Street. The tour is scheduled to last from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We will not be having lunch, but we will be providing drinks and snacks. The bus will be air conditioned and will have a bathroom on board. As we travel the route, we will be showing the video of the virtual tour on overhead monitors.

CAT Question: So the bus will be leaving from the ADOT building where we have held some of these meetings?

Timothy Tait: Yes. We will also be sending you a map of the bus route we will be taking. The tour will begin at ADOT and will first proceed to the Eastern Section of the study area. At a certain location, a few colleagues and myself will be taking a hike. You are welcome to join us if you wish. After we view the Eastern Section, we will visit the Western Section, which includes looking at the area of the tank farms. Any questions?

(No questions came from the CAT members.)

Timothy Tait: Thank you

Tom Keller: Once again, let us know at your earliest convenience if you will be able to attend the bus tour. We have a number of cards from the visitors tonight.

CAT Question: I have a suggestion. Can the public read their question?

Tom Keller: I admit that last time; I did stumble through some of these.

CAT Question: What was the thought process of having the facilitator read the public questions? Since we only have a half hour for these questions, it may be smoother if the public reads their own questions.

CAT Comment: People should have the option if they want to read their questions.

CAT Comment: I second the motion.

Tom Keller: Any discussion?

CAT Question: So why has the facilitator read the questions in the past?

Tom Keller: Part of the reason for me reading them is because of time constraints.

CAT Question: Do you mean when someone has a question that can be answered as opposed to a statement?

Tom Keller: Yes.

Is there a motion?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: 12 votes to 1.

Tom Keller: The motion carries.

Public Written Question¹: Date of DEIS to FHWA, AZ Div[ision]- is? Anticipated Date of submittal to FHWA San Francisco is?

Bill Vachon: As we mentioned earlier, those dates can't be determined at this time.

Public Written Question: Mr. Herzog talked of I-10 improvement between [Loop] #202 East and Riggs Road to the south for widening. What is happening with the proposed widening study begun in 2003 (at GRIC Community Center meetings) of I-10 from Rte 387 South to Ina Rd? This seems to have died an early death from the 2 meetings covered at GRIC in winter/spring 2003.

Public Written Question: Re: Proposed (202)-Pecos RD Alignment: - In 2000 and 2001 according to the MAG website, they approved 8 'Route Alternatives' for the CANAMEX going thru Maricopa County – one short piece of road on these maps is labeled "SR202L",

¹ Public written questions are typed verbatim, with the exception of text in brackets that has been added to assist in the reader.

showing up out of NOWHERE. Is this stretch of road, the SR202L, supposed to link up with the western end of the proposed 202 over Pecos Road?

Timothy Tait: Yes.

Public Written Question: Part of these “Alternative” routes show Riggs Rd, to Beltline to 19th Avenue, to SR202L. However, Riggs Rd and 19th Avenue show they’re on Gila River land – if we cannot use Riggs, Beltline to 19th Avenue, then will that portion of routes be scrapped, and the SR202L and proposed 202 over Pecos Rd BECOME the ALTERNATIVE CANAMEX through our neighborhood?

Timothy Tait: The Loop 202 will not be a part of the CANAMEX Corridor. It will be Interstate 8 to State Route 85.

Public Written Question: Or, are you telling us there are 2 major highways proposed through this area??? 202 and CANAMEX???

Timothy Tait: The CANAMEX Corridor has nothing to do with the South Mountain Freeway.

CAT Member Written Question: Will the EIS include a discussion about hazardous air pollutants in addition to the criteria pollutants?

Mark Hollowell: Yes (answered one on one).

CAT Member Written Question: Will we have time to meet with our represented organizations, have necessary dialog to generate comments/recommendations that can be brought back to SMCAT before decisions are made?

Timothy Tait: The CAT will complete their meetings when the minimum 45-day comment period following the public release of the Draft EIS is completed. This is the window that the CAT will have to make their recommendation.

CAT Member Written Question: Will the CAT see and have a chance to review and comment on the DEIS before it is released to the public for comment?

Bill Vachon: This will not be the case. You will have access to the Draft EIS when it is released to the public. This is due to legal issues.

Public Written Question: Why was SMCAT not given a “no build” option when voting on the Western alignment? Will there be a “no build” option when voting on the Eastern alignment?

Bill Vachon: When the CAT was reviewing the Western Section alternatives, the decision was made to decide on one preferred alignment. For the CAT decision on the Eastern

Section we are looking at either the Pecos Road alignment or no build since you can't just build one section of the freeway without building the other.

Public Written Question: Since an Administrative Draft of the EIS is currently under review by the Federal Highway Administration and other governmental agencies what the purpose is and need of the SMCAT to continue to meet on the proposed South Mountain Freeway?

ADOT Written Response (*e-mailed on December 3, 2007*): The South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team is an important component of this study's public involvement process. This process was developed so that community stakeholders can be integrated into the decision-making process. The purpose of the SMCAT is to provide a forum for communication between ADOT, FHWA, and the local community regarding the proposed South Mountain Freeway. The SMCAT's endorsement will be considered before ADOT makes its final recommendation.

Although the Draft EIS is currently being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration, this is not the final document. At some point next year, the Draft EIS will be released to the public for review and comment. The SMCAT will be involved and will review and may provide comments during this time, as can general members of the public.

Following the public comment period on the Draft EIS, public comments will be considered and addressed in the Final EIS. The SMCAT and the public will also have the opportunity to comment on the Final EIS.

Public Written Question: What criteria is used by ADOT to determine which "Press Clippings" are included in the distribution to the CAT? For example are letters to the editor included in their packets?

Timothy Tait: We are documenting any articles that are written by reporters. We are not collecting any of the letters written to the editor of the newspapers.

Public Written Question: Which parts—if any of the five plus year old SMCAT meeting process will be included in the DEIS? Will any "Press Clippings" or Meeting "Summaries" be included?

Bill Vachon: The press clippings and meeting summaries will not be included in the Draft EIS. It will be a part of the official record, but not the Draft EIS.

Public Written Question: What specific plans does ADOT have to prevent the proposed SMF from being used by the CANAMEX truck traffic? The proposed SMF is about 50 miles shorter than using "recommended" corridor of Interstate 8 to SR 85, then SR 85 to I-10 and then I-10 to US Route 93?

Public Written Question: I don't believe a "recommended" route or a "resolution" by MAG will motivate the 18-wheelers to take a 50 mile detour. ADOT needs to get real on this issue.

Timothy Tait: ADOT is working on getting the CANAMEX definition revised. We are making efforts to clarify the State of Arizona's preference on the route.

Public Written Question: The 2004 election designated more than \$1 Billion (in 2004 dollars) for the construction of the SMF portion of Loop 202. How accurate is the dollar figure considering what has happened to construction materials cost, fuel, etc over the past three years and knowing that the projected completion date of the proposed SMF is 2015?

ADOT Written Response (*e-mailed on December 3, 2007*): The amount of money allocated for the construction and right-of-way funding for this potential freeway is \$1 billion. The figure does not include potential materials or energy cost increases that could happen before construction would begin in 2015. This estimate is updated throughout the study process.

Public Written Comment: One of the generalizations that MAG/ADOT likes to make is that construction of the SMF reduces traffic on the surrounding arterial street network. Well to me that is like saying you can't drown in a river that averages two inches deep.

Case in point: Under the current design of the SMF 32nd Street will not be an access point. Per data from Kerry Wilcoxon, P.E. City of Phoenix the segment of the road from Pecos to Frey carried 8,100 vehicles per day in 2005. Knowing this traffic will need to go someplace as John Rodriguez from Lakewood between 32nd & 40th Street. Therefore the traffic will probably head back to Chandler to 40th Street and south to the SMF or vice versa—now that is another 8,000 cars per day.

Going east to 24th Street doesn't work any better as there is a three-way stop where Ray & Chandler Blvd. come together and then you need to make a left turn to get onto 24th Street. Liberty Lane going east past the DVHS is not a good option due to the location of an elementary and middle school.

Tom Keller: Are there any other questions?

CAT Question: Ahwatukee residents say that they are concerned about crime rates near freeways. Can we check the crime statistics in the Loop 202 in Chandler?

Tom Keller: Are you making a motion?

CAT Comment: It is a statistical fact that the closer you are located to a freeway the closer you are to crime.

CAT Comment: I would take any crime over being cut up and put into a trash can.

CAT Comment: It has nothing to do with the community that you are in, the bad guys are everywhere.

Tom Keller: The next CAT meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 13 at this location.

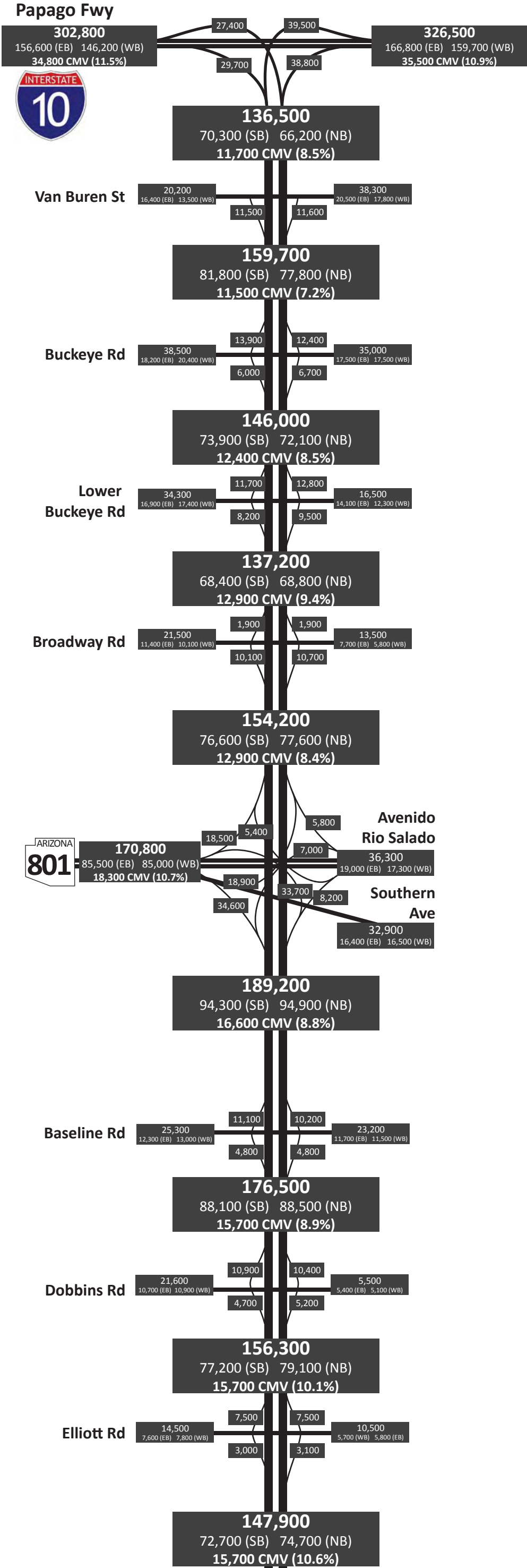
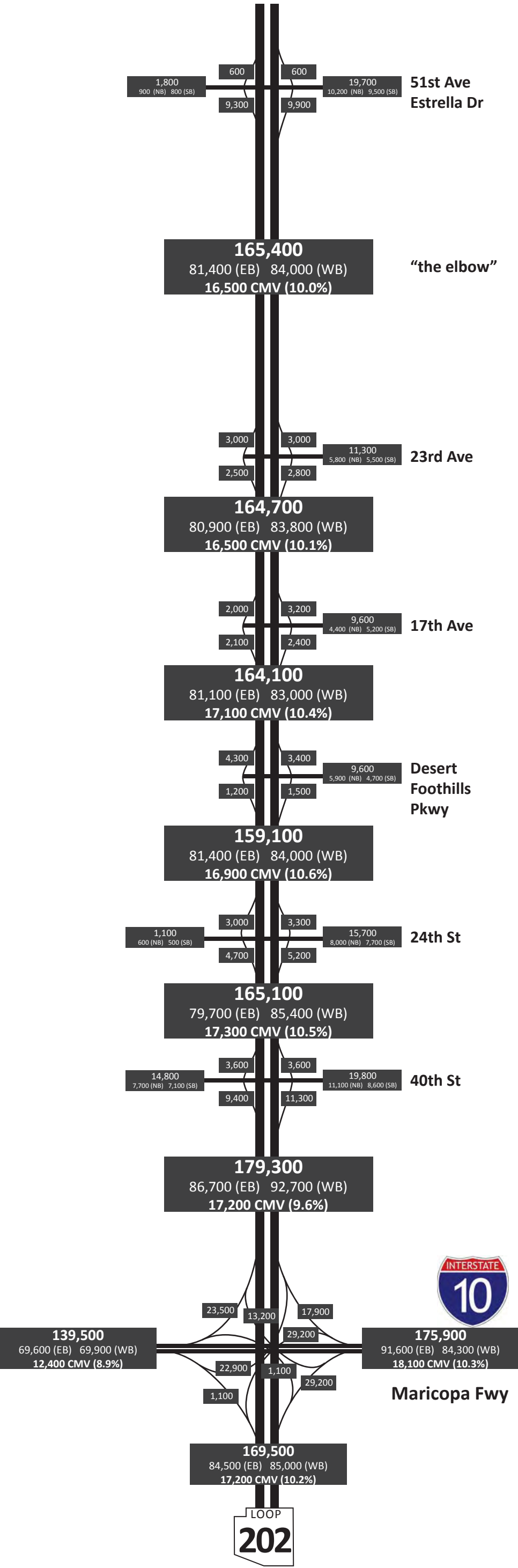
(Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.)

South Mountain Freeway EIS
CAT Meeting Topics
Draft
December 6, 2007

Meeting	Topics
12/13/07	Traffic
1/17/08	E1 Alternative Initial Screening – Design and Affects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Profile options along Pecos Road Section <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Freeway below existing ground ▫ Freeway on existing ground ▫ Identified alternative in the DEIS ▪ Profile options at South Mountain Ridges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Open Cut ▫ Bridge ▫ Tunnel ▫ Identified alternative in the DEIS
2/28/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jurisdictional Waters ▪ Floodplains ▪ Water Resources
3/20/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visual Resources ▪ Biological Resources ▪ Land Use
4/17/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hazardous Materials ▪ Geotechnical ▪ Energy ▪ Utilities
5/22/08	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Conditions ▪ Noise ▪ Environmental Justice
	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Section 4(f) and 6(f) ▪ Cultural Resources
	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economics ▪ Cumulative & Secondary Impacts ▪ Prime and Unique Farmlands
	E1 Alternative DEIS - Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public Comment Summary ▪ Construction Cost/Right-of-Way Cost/Total Cost
	Air Quality Panel - General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion of air quality issues, non-project specific.
Release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review and comment.	
	Air Quality Panel - Project Specific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion of air quality issues, project specific.
	DEIS Open Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss comparison of impacts of Action versus No-Action Alternative ▪ Discuss mitigation ▪ CAT member discussion regarding the DEIS
	CAT Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CAT recommendation regarding Action versus No-Action Alternative

South Mountain Freeway EIS and L/DCR
W55 ALTERNATIVE

2030 Daily Travel Demand Forecasts (with Commercial Vehicle projections)
Modeled for 4 general-purpose lanes + 1 HOV lane



Note: CMV denotes Commercial Vehicle projections (trucks).
Figure Not To Scale
©2006-2007, All rights reserved.
Commercial Vehicle Volumes and Percentages 11/13/2007

What is Level of Service?

Transportation analysts developed a uniform way of describing the overall quality provided by a given transportation facility, service, or network. In 1965, a level of service (LOS) "report card" method was introduced where highway quality of service was "graded" using six letter grades, "A" through "F," with "A" being the best and "F" being the worst. With the LOS scheme, traffic engineers were better able to explain operating and design concepts of highways to the general public and elected officials. The LOS letter scheme is now commonly used throughout the United States.

LOS is most often modeled during the morning and evening commuting periods. These are the times when

most motorists are on the roads, when traffic volumes are highest. As a result, the operational efficiency of the network can be assessed under "worst case" conditions.

For the proposed action, widely accepted LOS qualitative measures were applied to characterize operational conditions of traffic flow. These measures characterize traffic conditions using factors such as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, and comfort and convenience. For freeways, LOS E describes operation at capacity. Operations at this level are volatile, because there are virtually no usable gaps in the traffic. Vehicles are closely spaced, leaving little room to maneuver at speeds that still exceed

45 mph. Any disruption, such as vehicles entering from a ramp or a vehicle changing lanes, can establish a "disruption wave" that affects traffic flow. At capacity, the traffic has no ability to dissipate even the most minor disruption, and any incident can be expected to produce a serious breakdown with extensive traffic back-up. Maneuverability within the traffic stream is extremely limited, and the levels of physical and psychological comfort afforded the driver are poor. Because of this, most transportation planners strive to design freeways to achieve LOS D or better.

Levels of service



LOS A



LOS B



LOS C



LOS D

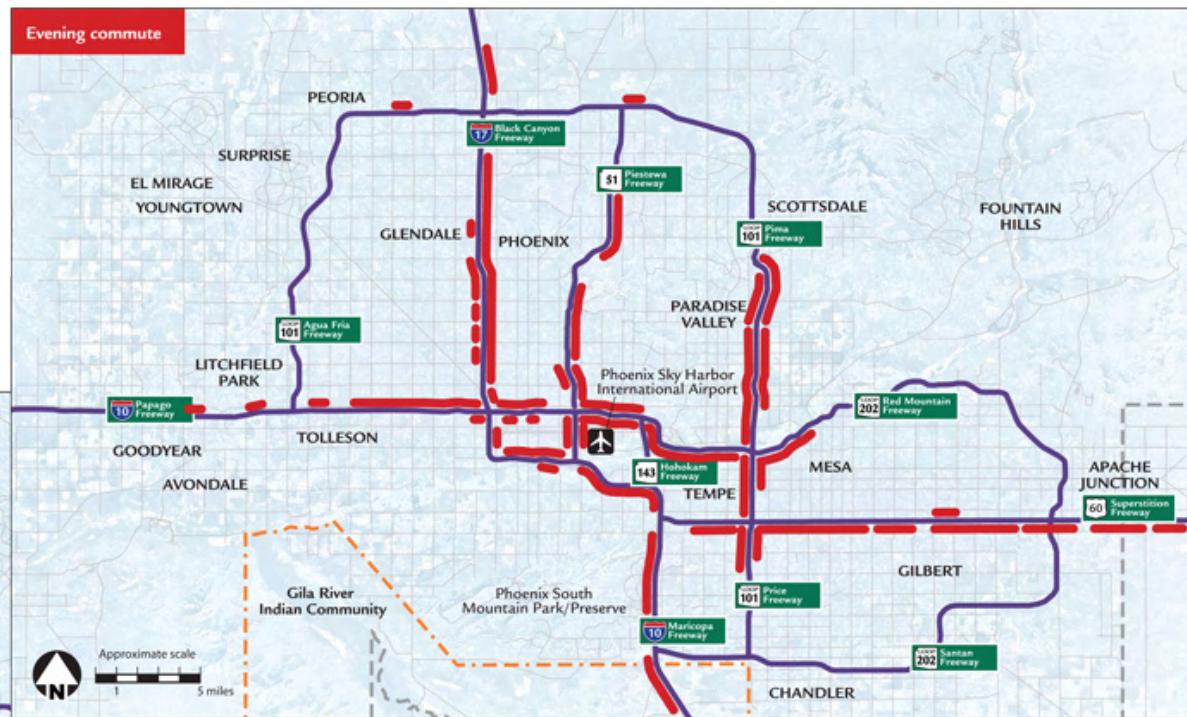
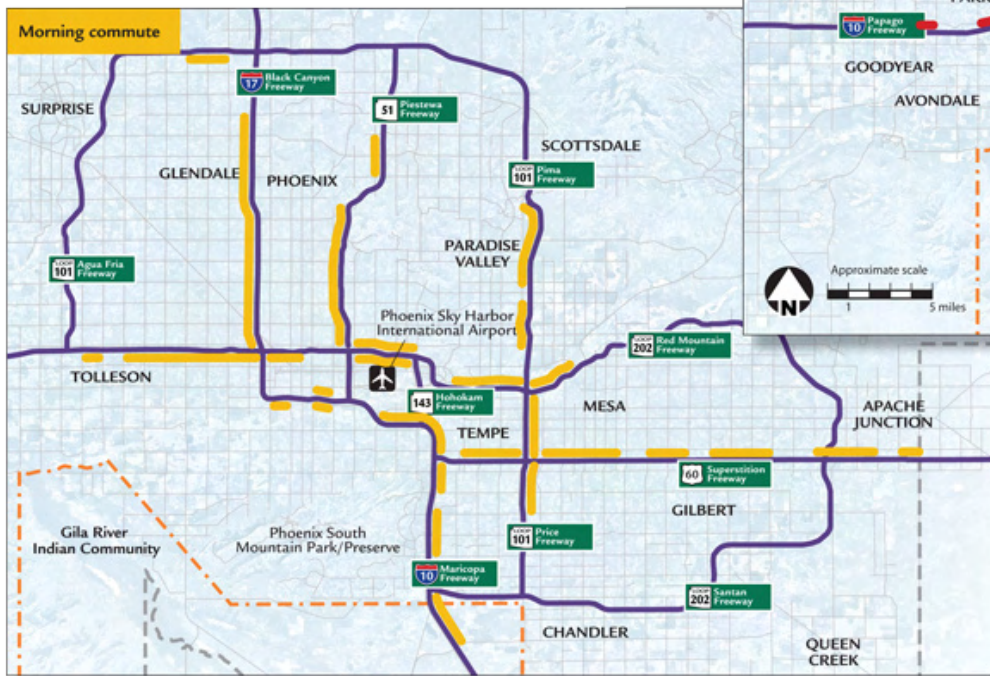


LOS E



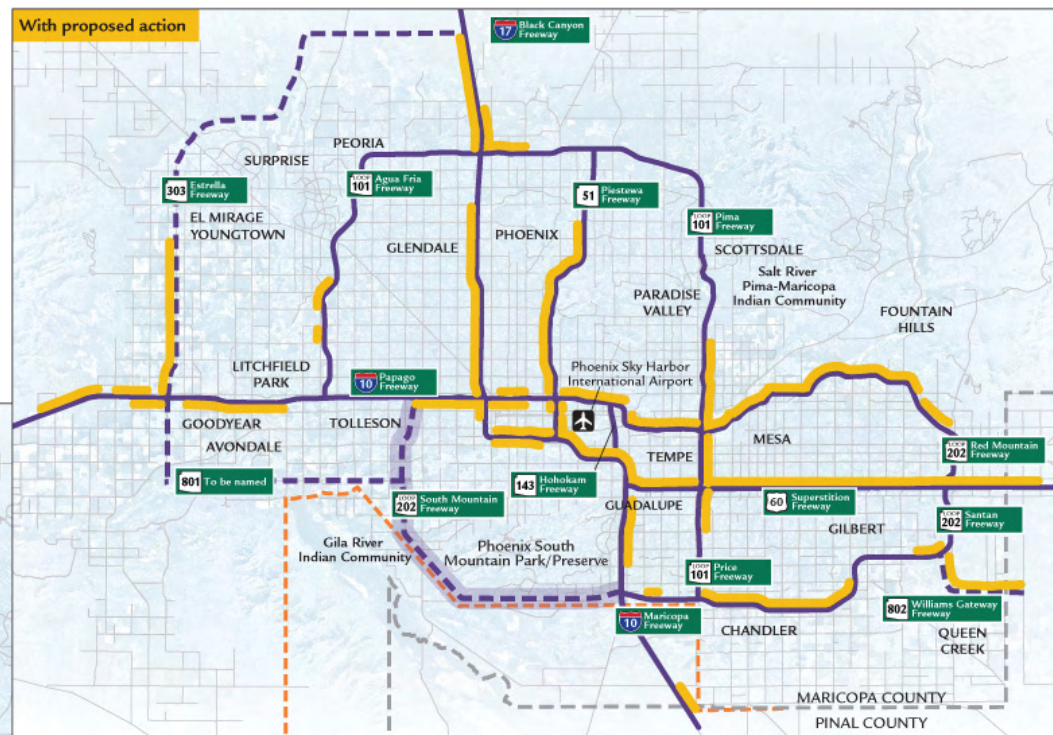
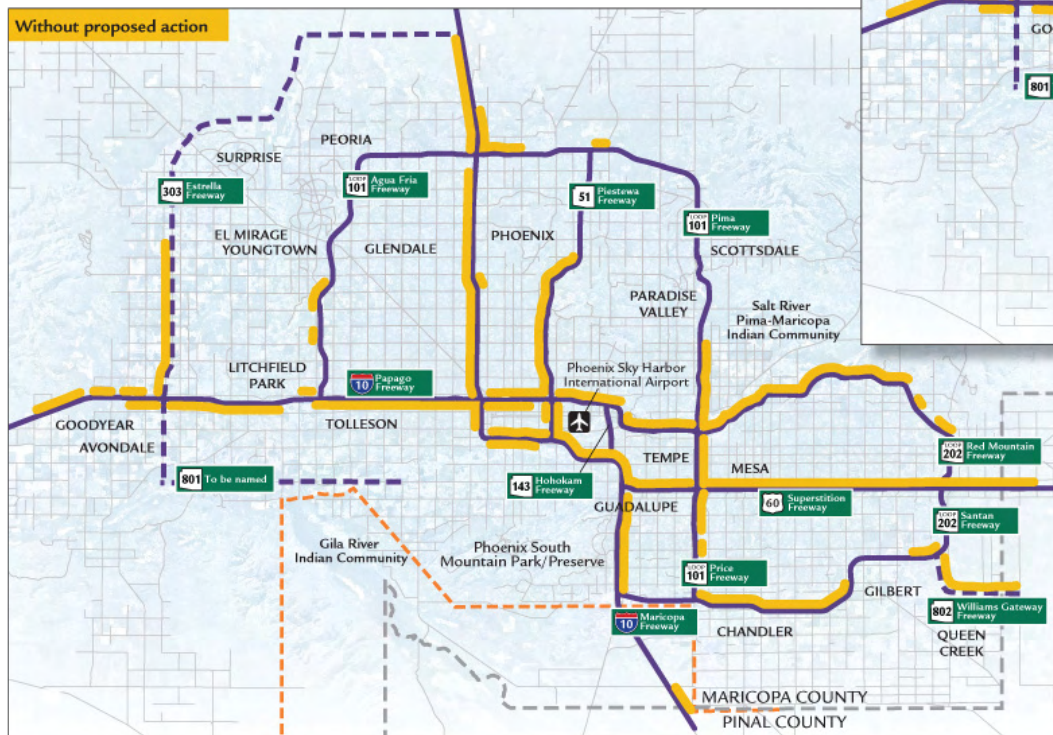
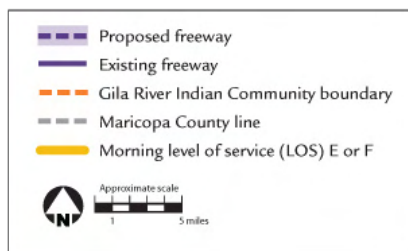
LOS F

- Existing freeway
- Gila River Indian Community boundary
- Maricopa County line
- Evening level of service (LOS) E or F
- Morning LOS E or F

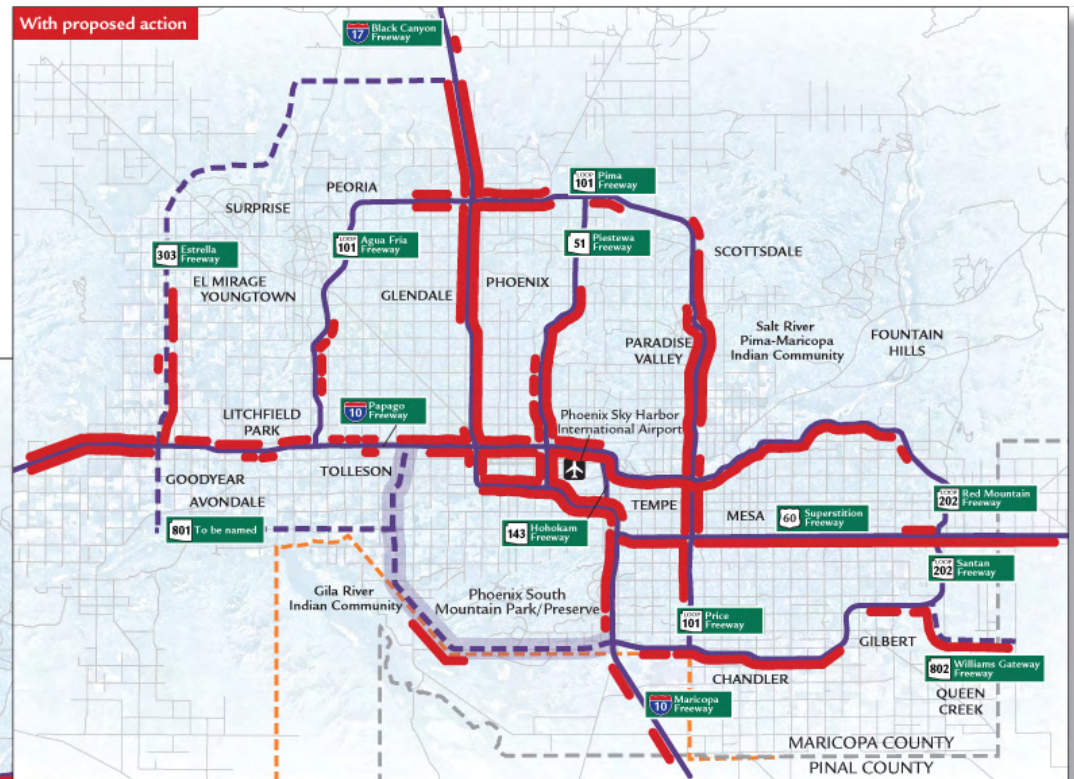
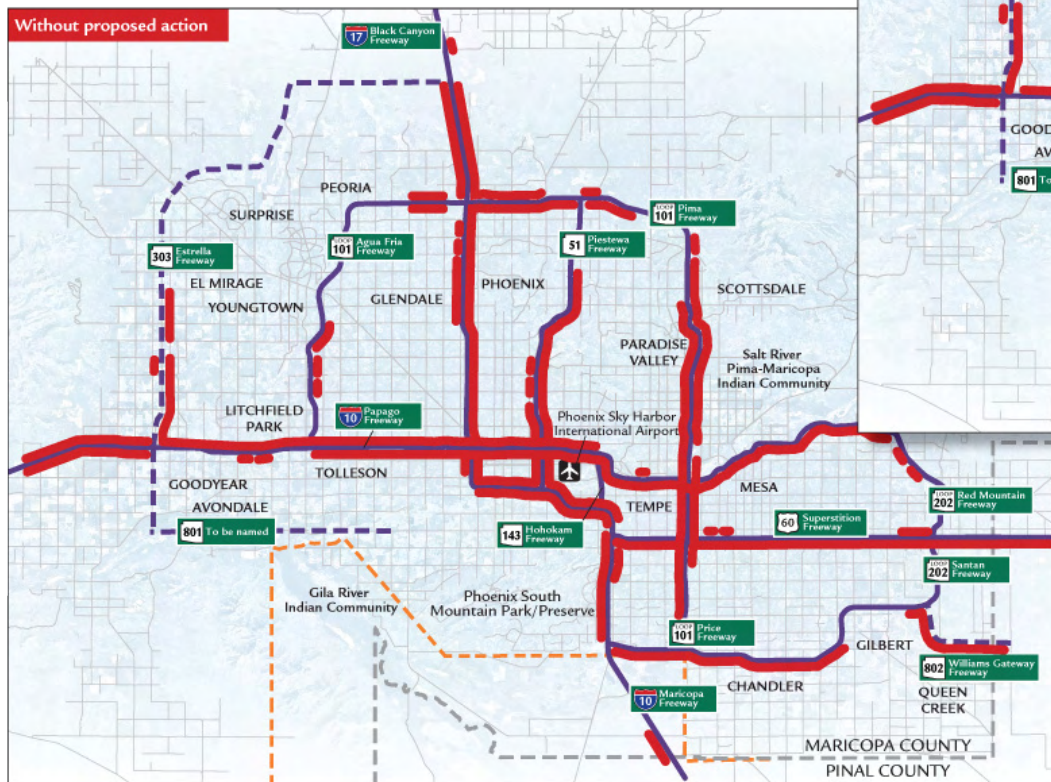
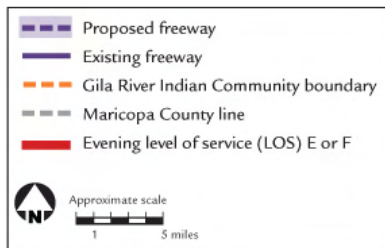


The highlighted freeway segments operate in an undesirable condition during the designated peak period. Typically, there is more overall congestion on the freeway system during the evening commute.

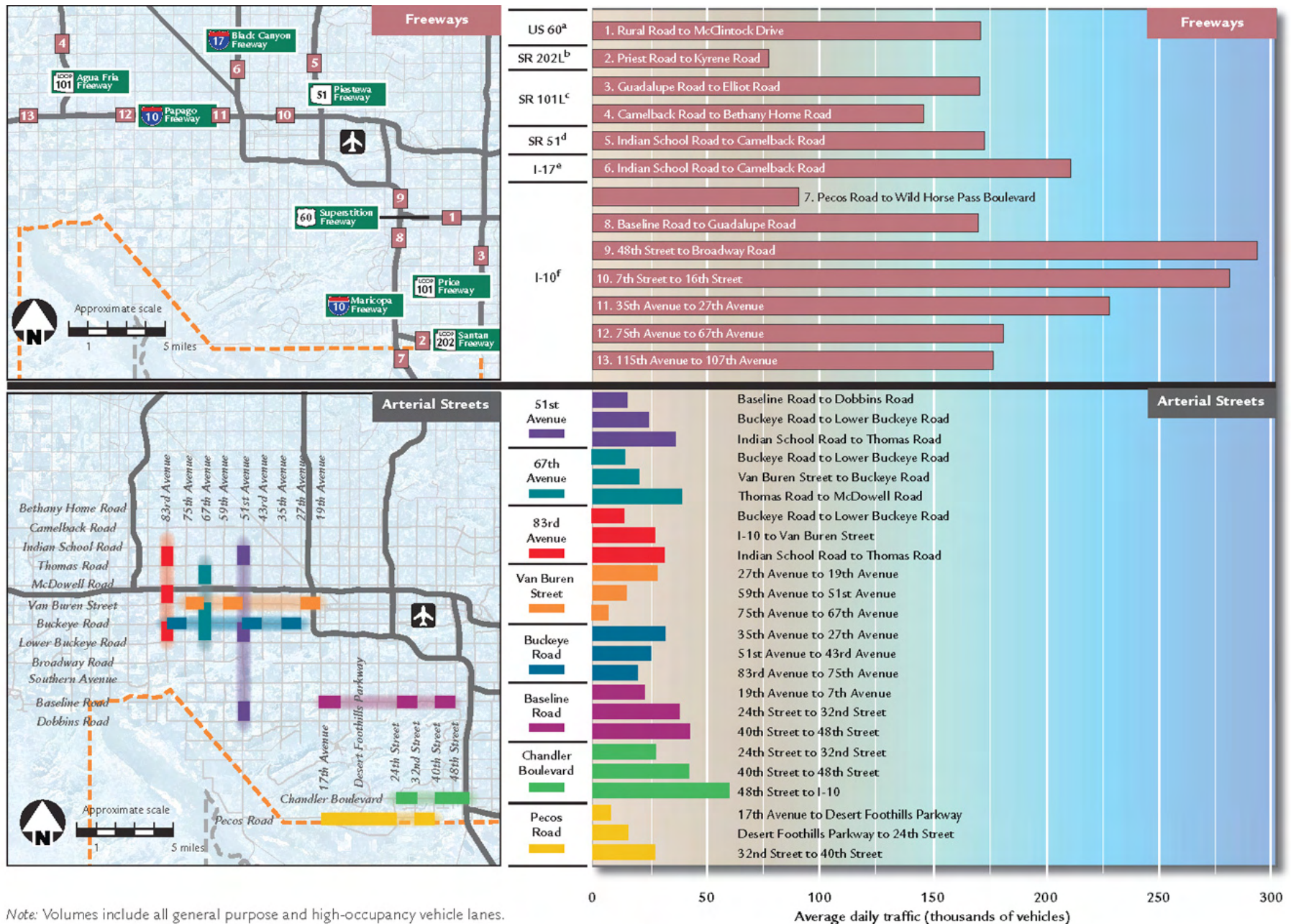
Source: Maricopa Association of Governments, 2006; used with permission



Source: Maricopa Association of Governments, 2006; used with permission



Source: Maricopa Association of Governments, 2006; used with permission

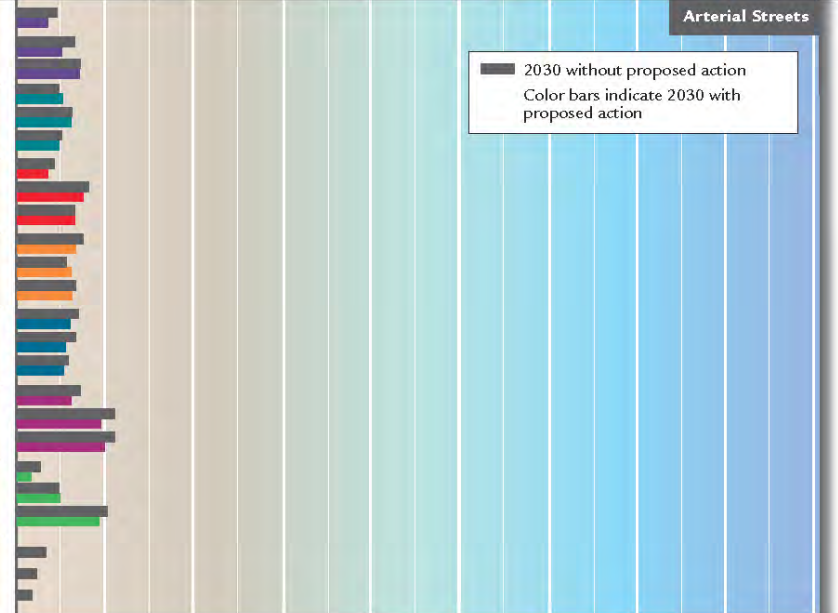
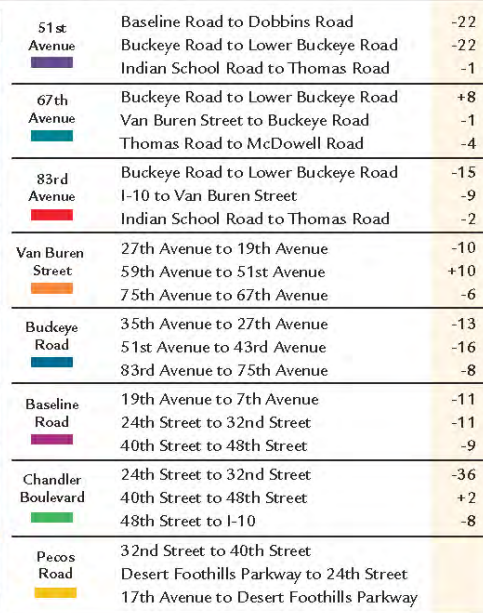
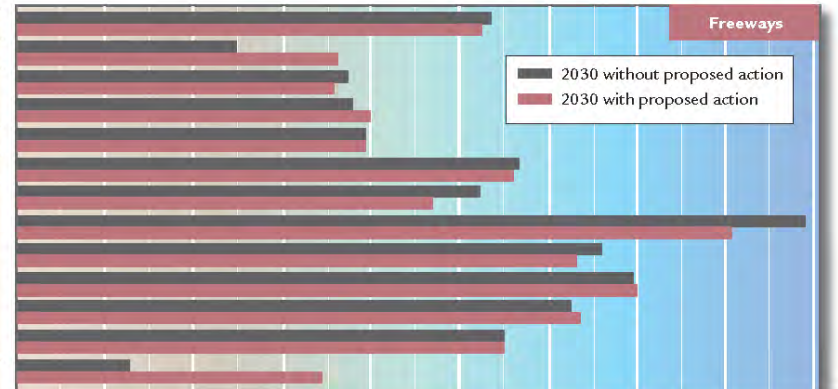
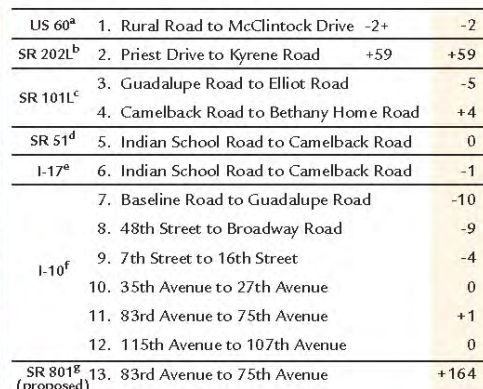


Note: Volumes include all general purpose and high-occupancy vehicle lanes.

^a US Route 60 ^b State Route 202L (Loop 202) ^c State Route 101L (Loop 101) ^d State Route 51 ^e Interstate 17 ^f Interstate 10

Source: Arizona Department of Transportation Web site, 2006

Freeways are intentionally designed to handle much higher daily traffic volumes than arterial streets. Based on lane capacities used in the Maricopa Association of Governments travel demand model, a typical six-lane arterial street could carry 51,000 vehicles per day, while a typical six-lane freeway could carry 165,000 vehicles per day. Such characterization helps to direct drivers to the appropriate transportation facility for the intended driving purpose.



Source: Maricopa Association of Governments, 2006; used with permission

December 2007 **Draft**



Area legislators continue fight against freeway route

Colleen Sparks

The Arizona Republic

Oct. 4, 2007 02:13 PM

A controversial proposed freeway touted to alleviate traffic between the east and west Valley would be moved off track if two Southeast Valley legislators have their way.

State Rep. John McComish, R-Ahwatukee Foothills, and State Sen. John Huppenthal, R-Chandler, both majority whips, told residents at an Ahwatukee forum Wednesday night that they will keep pushing to see the freeway route moved to the Gila River Reservation. Their District 20 includes Ahwatukee, west Chandler and south Tempe.

The current proposal that members of South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team is considering would run the freeway along the Pecos Road alignment and cut through South Mountain Park, connecting to Interstate 10 at 55th Avenue.

Residents, including some freeway opponents, asked the two legislators for their opinions on the Pecos Road route.

Huppenthal and McComish said negotiations should continue with members of the Gila River Indian Community.

"I remain cautiously optimistic that we can work it out with them," McComish said. "It seems very difficult for me to believe it would go along Pecos," displacing hundreds of homes, he added.

Ultimately the Federal Highway Administration and Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) would make the final decision on whether to build the freeway and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) would then decide whether to pay for it.

Ahwatukee resident Greta Rogers, an outspoken freeway opponent, encouraged Huppenthal and McComish to investigate the money ADOT has spent just on studying the freeway issue.

"The city (of Phoenix), maybe with your wisdom and help, could sit down and negotiate with Gila River," Rogers said.

South Mountain advisory team member John Rodriguez of Ahwatukee questioned the legislators on the issue.

"What if the (Gila River) nation says, 'No way' to a freeway? Are you leaning more towards building a freeway or scrapping the idea?" Rodriguez asked.

Huppenthal said he did not believe the South Mountain Freeway would be built on Pecos Road but if it were, sound barriers and buffers should be looked at to protect residents.

"I hope and pray it doesn't come to that," McComish said.

ADOT and MAG officials contend that the freeway would reduce Valley commuters' frustrations from the east to the west. Opponents say they are concerned about the environmental and health impacts, as well as homes that would be destroyed in its path.

McComish and Huppenthal also talked about:

- Whether state residents would have to pay taxes if roads were converted to toll roads, something discussed at the state level. Huppenthal said he believed the tolls would not be added on existing roads.
- State budget woes. The downturn in the housing market is leading to lower state tax collections and less money than planned to cover the adopted budget. The Joint Legislative Budget Committee is studying options, the legislators said.

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- Arkyan
- Posted: Oct 4, 2007 at 3:17 PM
- [Report abuse](#)

Oh, boo-hoo on Ahwatukee. I don't feel in the least bad for the people whose homes will be razed for this freeway - the route is by no means a brand new thing. It's been on the maps for well over a decade, and if people can't be bothered to educate themselves about the area they are planning to buy a home, well, I can't be bothered to feel bad for their situation.

- [Matthew9426](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Oct 4, 2007 at 3:42 PM
- [Report abuse](#)

This has been on the books since the 80's. This will be the biggest waste of money this state has ever seen. I have no doubt in my mind that the freeway is a necessary thing, we need the reliver BAD. But here's how this is going to play out:

Gila River will say no way to the freeway unless you give us a fat stack of cash for the right-of-way rights and it will likely be a lease so it will have to be renewed. That will cost taxpayers a fortune. ---- OR----

ADOT and MAG will purchase the right-of-way from Ahwahtukee homeowners costing..... a fortune. the freeway will get built and the cost for that small stretch of freeway will be per mile more than any other freeway in the state before you even figure the cost of the land acquisition.

End result a necessary item for Arizona is going to end up costing Arizonans WAY more than it ever should.

- sns8snl
- Posted: Oct 4, 2007 at 4:18 PM
- [Report abuse](#)



Thanks for the graphic, AZRep, or at least a link to one showing the proposed routes. LOL

[OldCrusty](#) | [Profile](#)

Posted: Oct 4, 2007 at 5:48 PM

- [Report abuse](#)



Look at some older maps, sns8snl. I have a Arizona State map here in hand from 1984 (Purchased at a local 7-11) that show the proposed freeway. Looking at the map it shows all open range land with no other street or local roads in the area. So not saying people did not know about this is BS it's here right here. I would look at any home in the way as land specualtors or squatters and shuld only be paid the cost of the orignl purchase price and no more.

- [Jason5200](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Oct 5, 2007 at 8:29 AM
- [Report abuse](#)

HEY GUYS I JUST MOVED TO AWATUKE. I CAN'T EVEN SPELL IT BUT I'M A GENIUS. OKAY HERE'S THE THING, I KNEW THE FREEWAY WAS GOING TO BE BUILT, BUT NOW I THINK IT MUST BE STOPPED. I'M SO SMART, I KNOW MORE THAN ADOT AND THEIR TRAFFIC MODELERS TO BOOT. THEY HAVE COMPUTERS CHURNING OUT TRAFFIC DATA, BUT I JUST USE MY HEAD. CAUSE I'M SO SMART. THISFREEWAY WON'T DO NOTHING. WE DON'T NEED TO BUILD IT. HI I'M FROM AWATUKE. STILL CAN'T SPELL IT.

- CorrectOpinion
- Posted: Oct 5, 2007 at 5:05 PM
- [Report abuse](#)

I attended the South Mountain Citizen Advisory Team meeting last night. It seemed to me, that the people on the Board thought they actually get to decide if the freeway gets built or not. However, the understanding I received from ADOT was that this Board gets to give their opinion as to whether they should build the freeway. Also, the public (i.e. citizens, businesses, politicians) is allowed to give their opinions.

- CorrectOpinion

- Posted: Oct 5, 2007 at 5:09 PM
- [Report abuse](#)

After the meeting, I spoke with one of the ADOT employees. I asked and he confirmed that the freeway had been planned in the '80s. It was, at the time, approved to build but was not funded. I asked why the City of Phoenix, after the approval, issued build permits for those houses that are supposed to be in the build path. The jist I got from him was Phoenix Politics. If anyone should pay for the houses it should be the City of Phoenix for issuing build permits and the developers for building in the previously approved freeway corridor.

- CorrectOpinion
- Posted: Oct 5, 2007 at 5:12 PM
- [Report abuse](#)

I also talked to one of the Board members. She basically told me that Gila River has absolutely no intention of providing land for the freeway corridor. Gila River does not want to give up any of their agricultural land to us "whities".

- CorrectOpinion
- Posted: Oct 5, 2007 at 5:16 PM
- [Report abuse](#)

The Draft Environmental Impact Study is being reviewed by MAG/FWHA. When approved, it will be provided to the public in several places, including FedEx/Kinkos. At that time, the public has 45 days to make comments/suggestions about the South Mountain Freeway project. After that, ADOT will make a decision on how and if to build.

- CorrectOpinion
- Posted: Oct 5, 2007 at 5:21 PM
- [Report abuse](#)

All of the environmental impact, air pollution, noise, etc are just stalling tactics for the freeway. The Rep above might want to go talk to his Mayor of Chandler since the Mayor supports the freeway. This freeway is NOT for Ahwatukee, it is for the rest of the Phx area. Everyone, except some residents in 'Tukee, want the freeway done. Sorry, if your house is in the way, move.

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Pecos wrong for freeway say 2 state lawmakers

[By Doug Murphy](#)

October 5, 2007 - 12:41PM

Two key state lawmakers both agreed that Pecos Road doesn't appear to be an appropriate route for the South Mountain Loop 202 Freeway during a Sept. 3 meeting.

"It's inconceivable to me that the 202 would be built along Pecos," said Sen. John Huppenthal, majority whip in the State Senate, who represents Ahwatukee Foothills and west Chandler.

He pointed to the impact the freeway would have on neighborhoods, including the removal of 255 homes to make way for the 10-lane freeway.

"It's unfathomable to me that it would go through and do that much damage," said Huppenthal, who before being elected to the State Senate spent years as a Chandler City Councilman, minimizing the impact of the 202 and 101 freeways to neighborhoods in that city.

Rep. John McComish, majority whip in the House, who lives in Ahwatukee Foothills, said that while the Gila River Indian Community currently opposes a freeway alignment on tribal land, south of Pecos Road, he's hoping attitudes will change.

"I remain cautiously optimistic that we can work something out with them," McComish said.

But if the freeway does eventually get built where Pecos Road now is, Huppenthal said he would help to make sure that there is minimum impact to residents.

"If it's going to be built... we've got to kick into high gear to make sure it has a minimal impact on residents," Huppenthal said during a town hall meeting in Ahwatukee Foothills on Wednesday.

Both said the Arizona Legislature has little input on the final decision. Instead, they pointed out that the Maricopa Association of Governments, which represents each city in the county and is responsible for county-wide transportation plans, along with the Federal Highway Administration, will make the final decision on the Loop 202 after the environmental impact statement is completed sometime next year.

Over the last few years the Arizona Department of Transportation has spent \$8.5 million to buy homes within the right of way and \$12 million for engineering services to produce an environmental impact statement needed before the freeway gets final approval.

Greta Rogers called for the lawmakers to investigate ADOT spending on the Loop 202.

"We don't pay taxes for irresponsible misuse of funds," said Rogers, who opposes the freeway as it was originally designed and instead wants a parkway where 18-wheel trucks would be prohibited.

In 1988 voters originally approved the Loop 202. Over the years the project went on hold as funding shortages reduced the number of freeway miles built in Maricopa County. During the

years there were proposals of building a parkway instead of a freeway and one plan to build the Loop 202 as a toll road on the Gila River Indian Community.

In 2004 voters approved a new transportation plan that included funding for the Loop 202, but didn't specify a route. At the same time ADOT's new design standards called for a wider freeway, which means that more homes than originally thought would have to go.

Since 2001 a Citizens Advisory Team has been assisting ADOT in the route and design of the freeway. It is expected that early next year there will be a draft environmental impact statement showing Pecos as the route in the east and roughly 51st Avenue in the west. The draft plan will be available for public comment before the final plan goes to the Maricopa Association of Governments and Washington for final approval.

Doug Murphy can be reached at (480) 898-7914 or dmurphy@aztrib.com.

Advisory team has questions about freeway impact on Ahwatukee

[By Doug Murphy](#)

October 9, 2007 - 9:44AM

Despite concerns that the process of approving the South Mountain Loop 202 Freeway is moving forward without its input, the South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team unanimously agreed last week that topics which had been glossed over for two years should be set aside for discussion in the coming months.

The issue was something of a sore spot because two years ago the advisory team was forced to focus on issues pertaining to the western route of the South Mountain Loop 202 Freeway and was told that Ahwatukee Foothills issues would be discussed “later.”

But the Arizona Department of Transportation has already submitted a draft environmental impact statement to the Federal Highway Administration, which addresses the Ahwatukee Foothill issues without the advisory team being let in on the results.

“We’ve been waiting for this discussion,” said Laurel Arndt, a member of the advisory team representing the Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee.

And it raised the fundamental question, again, of why have an advisory team to solicit local input and help ADOT update the design of the freeway if ADOT has already completed the draft environmental impact statement, which answers the questions of how the freeway will be designed and built and what impact it will have.

“What’s the purpose of this committee? You already got your draft environmental impact statement,” wondered Sandy Bahr, a member of the advisory team representing the Arizona chapter of the Sierra Club.

But Mark Hollowell from ADOT said that public input, both from the advisory team and next year from the public at large, is important to shaping the final environmental impact statement.

“This isn’t a slam dunk – we really are soliciting input from the public,” he said.

The advisory team’s plan is that in the coming months it will study traffic, air quality, impacts of the freeway on South Mountain Park, along with how the freeway will affect flood plains, cultural resources and the visual resources of Ahwatukee Foothills.

Once the draft environmental impact statement is released, some time next year, the advisory team will then look more closely at how the proposed freeway impacts air quality before making a final recommendation on either to build or not build.

The final environmental impact statement will include the public and advisory team comments and will then go to the Maricopa Association of Governments, which approves all Valleywide transportation projects, before going to Washington for final approval.

Opponents point out that the original plans were drawn up in the early 1980s to connect Interstate 10 in Ahwatukee Foothills with a six-lane freeway heading west, through a corner of South Mountain Park and then north to reconnect with I-10 around 55th Avenue.

Since then opponents say development has exploded and that the freeway needs a new route to take into account growth in Pinal County and in the far west.

At the same time ADOT has widened the freeway's footprint so that just in Ahwatukee Foothills an estimated 255 homes would have to be demolished.

Supporters point to rapid growth in the Valley and say that the 25-mile freeway segment is needed or gridlock will freeze I-10 as well as surface streets in Laveen and the East Valley.

In 2005 voters approved a half-cent sales tax continuation in Maricopa County to fund transportation projects, including the Loop 202 that was budgeted at \$1.1 billion. But figures from ADOT in August show that the estimated cost of the freeway stands at \$1.6 billion, which doesn't include hidden costs involving as many as 63 low- to high-priority potentially hazardous material sites on the west of the project near a fuel storage facility the freeway will pass next to.

For more information, visit www.southmountainfreeway.com

Doug Murphy can be reached at (480) 898-7914 or dmurphy@aztrib.com.



Freeway advisory team wants Gila participation

Colleen Sparks

The Arizona Republic

Oct. 10, 2007 02:18 PM

Ahwatukee Foothills residents will get a chance next year to read for themselves how the proposed South Mountain Freeway will impact everything from people to water to animals. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is working on a draft environmental impact statement that will also include air quality and other issues, said Tim Tait, community relations project manager for ADOT.

The South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team, as well as the public, will be able to see the draft in 2008, and offer input that Tait said can shape the final document.

"There will be lots of opportunity to review and comment on it," he said.

The advisory team has asked that the study include information on how the proposed freeway would specifically impact the heat island effect and cultural resources in Ahwatukee, among other things.

They also say they wish ADOT had not already started the document before they had finished their recommendations.

Team member Sandy Bahr of Arizona's Sierra Club said it made her feel like the team has "very little impact on the outcome." Bahr urged ADOT to discuss the heat island effect, a phenomenon where pavement increases urban temperatures.

"That's certainly a big problem for us in the Phoenix area," she said.

Some members of the advisory team want more input from the Gila River Indian Community before they decide whether to support the proposed South Mountain Freeway or oppose it.

The freeway would run along Pecos Road and cut through South Mountain Park, connecting to Interstate 10 at 55th Avenue.

Advisory team member Michael Goodman said retail centers and other developments being planned on the reservation will impact traffic along the proposed freeway.

"To talk about traffic you really need to know what's being built," Goodman said. "All those things add up. I want it to be formally on record that they were asked to be an active member."

A retail project is planned south of Pecos Road at 40th Street and a new, larger Lone Butte Casino will replace the Rock Solid concrete plant on Kyrene Road south of the Santan Freeway.

ADOT has reserved two seats on the advisory group for Gila River representatives, but it's been awhile since anyone from the group has attended as a committee member, Tait said.

Gila reservation resident Nathaniel Percharo of the Pecos Road/I-10 Landowners Association has not attended recently due to an illness, said Alia Maisonet, community public information officer for the Gila River Indian Community. Percharo could not be reached for comment.

The second seat, reserved for a Gila resident from District 4, has been vacant, Tait said.

Maisonet said earlier this week that she told a representative from the Pecos Road/I-10 Landowners Association that the advisory group wanted someone from the nation to attend a meeting.

Because the team consists of private residents and not government officials, the nation cannot mandate that representatives attend, she said.

However, Maisonet said the issue is important to her community. A Gila River technical team is talking about transportation issues, but not focusing on South Mountain right now, she said.

"Absolutely it will impact us," she said. "Our position so far is we're not going to have this freeway on our land."

The Tribal Council adopted a resolution in 2004 saying that the freeway cannot go on reservation land, Maisonet said.

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Freeway will take out homes, businesses

October 23, 2007 - 12:51PM

Changes over the years to the proposed South Mountain Loop 202 became apparent Saturday when members of the Citizens Advisory Team took a bus tour of the freeway's proposed route.

In Ahwatukee Foothills, while large swatches of land next to Pecos Road had been purchased years ago, additional homes will have to be bought since the Arizona Department of Transportation expanded a 1985 design from six lanes to the new standard of 10 lanes.

That leaves some homeowners, who thought they were safe when they purchased their home, now in the "red zone."

Other homes, especially along Redwood Lane between 26th Street and 27th Place, were built within the original right of way and will also have to go.

On the west side of the proposed route, the freeway will brush up against a giant fuel storage facility that required approval from the federal Department of Homeland Security.

The freeway will also pass over at least one Superfund toxic waste site, where groundwater has been contaminated over the years. According to Amy Edwards, an engineer with HDR, which is the lead design firm working on the freeway, that shouldn't be a problem.

"That is not a concern unless we enter into the water table with our construction, which we don't plan to do," she said.

Along with 255 homes in Ahwatukee Foothills scheduled to be demolished, 114 more homes and 69 businesses on the west side will need to be taken out to make room for the freeway, along with railroad tracks and rail spur lines that would have to be accommodated, fiber optic lines and water and sewer lines relocated.

The freeway will also cut into several South Mountain ridges, one in the park's boundary. According to Gila River Indian Community members the mountain is significant to their religion and culture.

When voters passed Proposition 400 in 2004, the freeway was budgeted at \$1.1 billion. But according to estimates released by ADOT in August, the cost is now around \$1.6 billion and climbing.

A draft Environmental Impact Statement has been written and is being reviewed by the federal government before it is released to the public for comments some time next year. Once the public comments have been evaluated and incorporated into the document the final environmental impact statement goes to Washington for approval.

For more information, visit www.southmountainfreeway.com to be directed to the new ADOT site that contains maps and information on the proposed freeway.

Doug Murphy can be reached at (480) 898-7914 or dmurphy@aztrib.com.



Tour gives close-up of South Mountain Freeway route

Colleen Sparks

The Arizona Republic

Oct. 23, 2007 02:04 PM

A guided bus tour of the proposed South Mountain Freeway on Saturday left some wanting more.

The three-hour tour didn't give them the answers they sought about cost, what will happen to homes and a school along the tentative freeway's path, and what members of the Gila River Indian Community think.

Ten members of the South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team, 12 members of the Arizona Department of Transportation's study team and four invited community members took the tour. It started at an ADOT office in downtown Phoenix and headed to Ahwatukee Foothills, where participants got off to look at a mountain ridge where the proposed freeway would cut through.

"We think it was educational," ADOT spokesman Doug Nintzel said of the tour. "Certainly some members were able to see things they hadn't seen before and ask some questions and we would hope that getting a closer look at the study area is a benefit as the advisory team's process moves ahead."

The team's mission is to recommend whether the freeway should be built or not. They will not make any additional recommendations about particular routes.

The freeway would run along Pecos Road, cut through South Mountain Park and connect to Interstate 10 at 55th Avenue. The route would cut through about 32 acres in South Mountain Park, including making cuts in mountain ridges that range from 120 to 220 feet deep, ADOT officials said.

Ahwatukee resident and advisory team member Carola Tamarkin said she was taken aback when the group stopped near several homes that would be in the freeway path towards the western edge of Ahwatukee.

"I don't understand how they are still building here," she said.

ADOT notifies the city, which informs developers of proposed freeways, said Amy Edwards, HDR project manager.

Tolleson resident and committee member David Lafferty said he thought developers see empty lots and focus on the money they can make.

ADOT has begun acquiring some land in Ahwatukee along the route, and could purchase homes impacted by the freeway if it is built, Nintzel said.

Committee member John Rodriguez, who lives in Ahwatukee Foothills, said he thought it was good that some people had a chance to see the proposed route along the Pecos Road alignment. But Rodriguez said he was disappointed that state elected officials, the ADOT director and more study team members did not attend. He was also disappointed that the group couldn't get up closer to the route.

"There wasn't a whole lot of opportunity to stop, to get out," he said.

ADOT wanted to organize a hike of a mountain ridge in Ahwatukee but could not get permission from private property owners there, said Tim Tait, ADOT community relations director.

Rodriguez asked the study team, which included Federal Highway Administration and HDR Engineering, how much had been spent so far on the South Mountain Freeway study.

More than \$1 million has been paid to HDR since 2001 but total, exact project study costs were not available Saturday, ADOT officials said.

"They're just skirting the issues," Rodriguez said.

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- [Michael833](#) | [Profile](#)
- Posted: Oct 23, 2007 at 3:16 PM
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I've seen the markings of the proposed highway and it makes me sick to my stomach the damage that will be done by building the road under the current plan. Strike a deal with the Gila Indian community to build the highway to the south of Pecos and west of the mountains or don't build it at all. Why are we clinging to a plan that is outdated and no longer is the a fit for the city?

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Crime forum drew lots of people, questions

Colleen Sparks

The Arizona Republic

Nov. 6, 2007 01:25 PM

Ahwatukee Foothills residents Monday night asked state and city leaders how to prevent crime and prosecute criminals. They were told to stay involved and keep their eyes open.

A crowd of about 100 pushed state and city officials to boost safety and prevent future crimes during a crime and fraud prevention forum sponsored by Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard, Phoenix Police Department, Phoenix City Councilman Greg Stanton and the *Ahwatukee Republic*.

Goddard has held similar forums in other cities, but he said Monday's drew the largest crowd.

"No surprise Ahwatukee would have the largest turnout," he said.

Stanton, who represents Ahwatukee, said Ahwatukee is an "active community" and that police there "take it personally" when crimes occur.

Attendees asked whether recent graffiti is connected to gangs and were told that it probably was not. They also asked about fraud, how the police address illegal immigrants who commits crimes and other topics.

Phoenix Police Chief Jack Harris, Stanton and Goddard talked about their efforts to prevent and fight methamphetamine use and identity theft.

Representatives from McGruff Safe Kids Total Identification System, Phoenix Block Watch Advisory Board, PAVE: Promoting Awareness, Victim Empowerment; Phoenix employees and anti-crime groups had tables set up and were providing information.

"If we can get the neighborhood mobilized . . . we can make a difference," Goddard said.

Konnie Sheen asked how the cellular company where she works in Ahwatukee could get police to help fight fraud. When criminals use someone else's identity to open accounts, the cellular company incurs losses, she said.

It's difficult to catch these criminals when they open accounts on the phone or online or give the phones to others, but the cellular companies could be listed as secondary victims, Phoenix Police Sgt. Jason Davis said. Davis offered to work with her and said residents can take steps to avoid becoming victims.

"One of the most important things is to stay on top of what's going on with (your) account," Davis said after the forum.

Ahwatukee resident Mike Durham asked if the speakers would support legislation allowing a police officer to suspend or take away a driver's license from someone that had used methamphetamine.

Stanton addressed Ahwatukee resident Jim Jochim's question about whether the proposed South Mountain Freeway along the Pecos Road alignment would bring more crime to the village.

"I don't know what the effect on criminal activity would be," Stanton said. "I'll find out to the extent possible that can be done."

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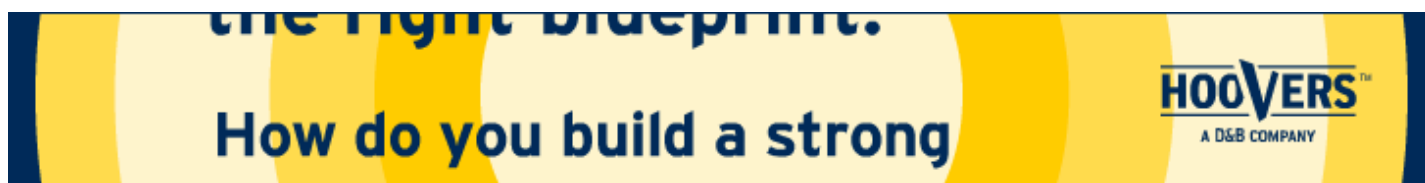
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November 16, 2007

Gila River gives OK to I-10 widening study

By Adam Gaub
Maricopa Tribune

The offer, said Gila River spokeswoman Alia Maisonet, is intended to help both Gila River and the surrounding communities improve their commute as population growth in the area continues.

"Public safety is a huge issue on that stretch," Maisonet said of I-10, which narrows to two lanes heading eastbound just before the Queen Creek/State Route 347 exit. "Public safety officials don't even have room to pull off to the side of the road."

Maisonet said in addition to allowing more right of way to be used to widen the freeway, the community would like to have frontage roads – which she says should have been built decades ago – added to any widening project.

ADOT has yet to make any determination as to the final scope of the project, having just begun the study on I-10 in the northern portion of Pinal County and the extreme southern end of Maricopa County. Gila River, however, continues to have its Transportation Technical Team (TTT) work with ADOT, making recommendations for added interchanges along I-10 through the reservation and improved bridges over washes.

Maisonet said the TTT was specifically looking at Seed Farm Road for a new interchange – a road that leads directly to the community's hospital and government facilities and is roughly aligned with Smith-Enke Road in Maricopa. An overpass is already in place for that road crossing I-10. Maisonet said the community is well aware of how their own citizens and Maricopa residents can be trapped by current road options.

"If there is an accident on Maricopa Road (SR 347), there is no alternative to get down there (to Maricopa), so we're looking at that," she said. "We are impacted no matter what because of our positioning. We want to make sure we improve all traffic flow on the reservation."

In addition to the TTT working with ADOT and studying its own road improvements, an economic advisory committee has also been formed to research where along I-10 new development could work best. The decisions on where to improve and build new interchanges could be critical not only to the tribe's economic development, but also to helping solve the transportation woes of its neighbors.

Near the end of 2006, the reservation reached out to surrounding communities to study transportation plans and gain a better understanding of how to integrate the needs of their neighbors with their own. For Maricopa's transportation manager, Brent Billingsley, the focus for Maricopa residents should be hounding state officials about the transportation needs in the area.

"We need to concentrate on getting SR 347 on the radar screen of the ADOT state transportation board," said Billingsley, who recommended citizens call and e-mail ADOT board members, state representatives and even the governor's office to gain the needed attention. "We still need people to put pressure on ADOT. They need to hear


the impacts (traffic) has on people's lives."

Billingsley is involved in a number of regional and state-level studies, including the Hidden Valley Roadway and Framework Study, which he believes could have "fantastic potential."

He said he is still hoping for a meeting that could be opened to the public for that study's members to hear the feedback from the public on the transportation needs of the area's residents.

In September, the Tucson District of the Arizona Department of Transportation announced plans to widen I-10 from the Pima-Pinal County line to Picacho Peak Road by the fall of 2009. The remainder of the widening, which will take I-10 up to three lanes in each direction, will begin some time after July 2009, to widen I-10 to Interstate 8 from Picacho Peak Road.



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Gilas allow limited access for freeway study

Kerry Fehr-Snyder

The Arizona Republic

Nov. 27, 2007 01:01 PM

At first blush, it looks like the most hopeful sign for South Mountain Freeway foes in years.

But the Gila River Indian Community wants to make it clear that allowing the state transportation department access to its land doesn't mean that the community has reversed its objection to building the proposed 22-mile freeway on reservation land.

"That's not even on the table," said spokeswoman Alia Maisonet. "This is just so it (the Arizona Department of Transportation) can complete the study for the Pecos Road alignment."

The community announced Tuesday that it will give ADOT one year to access its land for an ongoing environmental-impact statement, which is due out next year. Over the years, there has been talk of pushing the freeway alignment south onto reservation land, but the community has barred ADOT from studying that option.

The community's new decision doesn't change that, Maisonet said. Instead, ADOT will be allowed to study the water runoff, pollution and other environmental impacts created by the \$1.7 billion freeway along the proposed Pecos Road alignment in Ahwatukee.

"We explained to ADOT that this is not to mean there is a freeway on our land or a freeway even to be considered on the land," Maisonet said.

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Posted Nov-27
3:15 PM

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November 27, 2007

Land study delays Ahwatukee freeway decision

By Garin Groff
Tribune



ROAD WORK AHEAD: A sign at the intersection of Pecos Road and 24th Street points to the future. ADOT will conduct studies for the proposed South Mountain Freeway.

Tribune



The 202 freeway interchange is seen here from Pecos Rd. just west of I-10. ADOT will conduct studies for the proposed 202 South Mountain Freeway.

Tribune

Ahwatukee Foothills residents will have to wait a year or more to learn if and where the South Mountain Freeway

will be built. That makes for at least a one-year delay to determine if 225 homes will be razed to build the freeway through existing neighborhoods.

The later timeline became apparent Tuesday through an announcement about an environmental study on the Loop 202 extension.

The freeway is scheduled to be built in Ahwatukee Foothills, immediately north of the Gila River Indian Community.

The tribe announced Tuesday it's allowing the Arizona Department of Transportation to enter its land to determine how the freeway might affect the environment or areas where the tribe has held cultural ceremonies.

The study will take about a year and is required before ADOT could commit to building the freeway. Opponents in Ahwatukee have called for ADOT to build the freeway on vacant tribal land to spare homes and keep noise away from neighborhoods. The tribe has said no.

Gila spokeswoman Alia Maisonet said the community has only given a green light to the study of an Ahwatukee route.

"This in no way means the tribe has reconsidered the position of not building on our land," Maisonet said.

But the permit for entering tribal lands is still progress.

ADOT had a permit to go on the land before, but that expired in 2004. The tribe did not extend the permit and refused another one in 2005.

Highway officials said several years ago they expected to select a route by 2007, but the additional study will push that back at least a year.

The delay is not a result of the environmental study, ADOT spokesman Doug Nintzel said, but a reflection of how complex it is to build a new highway.

"It's never easy to predict how long a study like this will take and it's important to note that it's an active discovery process where issues that surface need to be examined," Nintzel said.

The 22-mile freeway would extend Loop 202 from where it turns into Pecos Road, wrap around the south side of South Mountain and reconnect with Interstate 10 at 55th Avenue.

It would cost \$1.7 billion and be built between 2009 and 2015.

The tribe wants to know what the freeway will do on tribal land and off it, such as on South Mountain. The current route, in order to not go on tribal land, requires ADOT to blast an 800-foot wide path through the western side of a mountain where the tribe has long held ceremonies.

"Culturally speaking that land is sacred to us," Maisonet said.



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THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

November 28, 2007

■ VALLEY & STATE online print edition



South Mountain Freeway study approved

Tribe allows access to Gila River Reservation

Kerry Fehr-Snyder

The Arizona Republic

Nov. 28, 2007 12:00 AM

AHWATUKEE - At first blush, it looks like the most hopeful sign for South Mountain Freeway foes in years.

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GRIC approves study of freeway impact

[By Doug Murphy](#)

November 30, 2007 - 11:40AM

The Gila River Indian Community has changed its position and will now allow state freeway planners to study what impact construction of the South Mountain Loop 202 on Pecos Road would have on tribal land.

But the tribe is still opposed to allowing the freeway to be constructed on the Gila River Indian Community.

“The granting of the right to entry in no way implies that Gila River Indian Community has altered our position on the alignment of Pecos Road,” said David White, a member of the community’s transportation technical team.

Tribal council has twice voted to oppose construction of the Loop 202 south of Pecos Road on its land.

Tribal approval for Arizona Department of Transportation staff and consultants to study the impact of the freeway on Gila River Indian Community land lasts until Nov. 1, 2008.

“I think it’s a very important first step, on their part, and I am grateful that they took it,” said Rep. John McComish, who opposed construction of the freeway on Pecos Road.

John Rodriguez also opposes the freeway on Pecos Road and welcomed GRIC’s actions.

“I’m very optimistic. I think it may be an opportunity for the nation to revisit the placement of the freeway on tribal land,” said Rodriguez, who is a member of the South Mountain Citizen Advisory Team that is advising ADOT on Loop 202 updates.

GRIC has opposed covering tribal land with the 10-lane, \$1.7 billion freeway. At the same time, the tribe is concerned about current ADOT plans to cut through two ridges in South Mountain, which they consider culturally significant.

“Culturally speaking, that land is sacred to us,” said Alia Maisonet, a spokeswoman for the tribe.

In 1985 the freeway was first proposed to connect Interstate 10 in Ahwatukee Foothills with I-10 near 51st Street, but money shortfalls put the project on hold.

In 2001 ADOT began a new study to update the decades-old plan, but growth and development had changed the original landscape. Many suggested that instead of demolishing 255 homes in Ahwatukee Foothills to make way for the freeway, that construction should take place on the Gila River Indian Community, which is mostly open farmland.

ADOT has completed a draft environmental impact statement showing construction on Pecos Road. The draft study is now under review by the Federal Highway Administration.

ADOT had hoped to release the draft environmental impact statement for public comment sometime early next year, with the final plan approved by the end of 2008.

It is not clear if permission for ADOT to study the freeway’s impact on the Gila River Indian Community will change the proposed timeline.

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Dist. 20 candidates, issues shaping up

Colleen Sparks

The Arizona Republic

Dec. 11, 2007 03:25 PM

The primary is nine months away, but competition for the one Senate and two House seats for state legislative District 20 is heating up. The district covers Ahwatukee, west Chandler and south Tempe.

Chandler resident and Democrat Ted Maish, 55, a retired Mesa High School industrial technology teacher, plans to challenge incumbent Sen. John Huppenthal, R-Chandler, for the Senate seat.

Rep. John McComish, R-Ahwatukee, is running for re-election for his House seat. Rep. Bob Robson, R-Chandler, is termed out.

Democratic candidates for the House seats are: Phill Westbrooks, 46, a Chandler resident and former Chandler City Councilman; and Corey Harris, a Tempe resident and Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran.

Republican candidates are Jeff Dial, a Chandler resident who ran unsuccessfully in 2004; Frank Schmuck, 42, a Tempe airline pilot who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Persian Gulf War; and Andy Swann, a Tempe resident and retired Arizona Department of Public Safety officer.

The district has about 37,530 registered Republicans, nearly 25,000 Democrats, about 600 Libertarians and about 25,300 other registered voters, according to the Secretary of State's [Web site](#).

Candidates said they expect the hot campaign issues to include education, how the Legislature contends with a state budget shortfall and illegal immigration. The primary election is Sept. 2 and the general election is Nov. 4.

"Education was my no. 1 issue when I ran previously," Dial said. "People move into the Ahwatukee, Tempe and Chandler area for the good schools."

Continued talks on the proposed south Mountain Freeway will also be a focus, candidates said.

"The fact that it's not taken care of says there's a lot of work to be done," Harris said.

Maish said he would like to "come up with a solution" to the proposed South Mountain Freeway issue that would not involve taking out any homes.

Schmuck said he "wants to hear more from the community" about the proposed freeway. He has a history of freeway issue involvement, and was nicknamed the "Father of Rubberized Asphalt" by Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman because he studied rubberized asphalt use and presented his findings to the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) prior to the U.S. 60 freeway widening.

"My belief has always been that where freeways traverse residential neighborhoods we have a duty and an opportunity to provide the best opportunities for our citizens to live," Schmuck said.

Westbrooks said the freeway alignment, balancing the budget and education are his top issues. He said he already has "good working relationships with the Gila River Indian Community and ADOT."

"I am hoping to bring those relationships and my experience to help resolve the freeway alignment," he said.

Swann, who has two children in the Kyrene School District, said he anticipates the possible unification of Kyrene, Tempe Elementary and Tempe Union High School districts will be a big topic.

"The people in Kyrene are very proud of the district and the performance it's had," Swann said. "I want (it) to be preserved as much as possible."

Both sides said they are excited about their candidates and optimistic about their chances of winning.

"We're getting ready to change the landscape in District 20," Ahwatukee Democrat Michael Williams, affirmative action chairman for the state Democratic Party said. "People don't want to rely on experience. They want some of these new ideas to work."

Mike Middleton, chairman of the Legislative District 20 Republicans, said he thinks the Republicans will "win pretty easily."

Staff reporter Edythe Jensen contributed to this report.

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Citizens Advisory Team to discuss Loop 202 this week

[By Doug Murphy](#)

December 11, 2007 - 10:27AM

The South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team meets Dec. 13, and topping the agenda is a discussion on the Gila River Indian Community's change of heart, granting permission for the Arizona Department of Transportation to enter tribal land to document the impact construction of the Loop 202 Freeway on Pecos Road would have.

The meeting will be held in the Student Union at South Mountain Community College, 7050 S. 24th St., beginning at 5:30 p.m. Thursday.

Tribal leaders have stressed that they still oppose construction of the freeway on Gila River Indian Community land, but allowing state staff to inspect the acreage directly south of Pecos Road is considered a positive sign by people who oppose construction of the freeway on Pecos Road.

Also on the agenda is a discussion on commercial vehicles that may use the road as well as a general discussion on traffic studies and how construction of the freeway would impact other highways and surface streets.

The South Mountain Loop 202 Freeway was first proposed in 1985 to connect with Interstate 10 in Ahwatukee Foothills, travel west through a corner of South Mountain Park and then turn north to reconnect with I-10 around 55th Avenue.

In 2001 ADOT decided to update the plan and formed the Citizens Advisory Team to help provide local input.

A draft environmental impact statement is scheduled to be released sometime next year.

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